

**THE SIXTH
CENTENARY
FESTIVALS OF
DANTE ALLIGHIERI
IN FLORENCE...**





LE FESTE

DEL SESTO CENTENARIO

DI

DANTE ALLIGHIERI

IN FIRENZE ED A RAVENNA.

THE
SIXTH CENTENARY FESTIVALS
OF
DANTE ALLIGHIERI

IN FLORENCE AND AT RAVENNA.

BY
A REPRESENTATIVE.



“O luce o gloria della gente umana!”



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A

TUTTI I DANTOFILI

SPARSI PER LO MONDO

QUESTO OPUSCOLO

È DEDICATO

NEL NOME DEL PADRE LORO

IL GRANDE ALLIGHIERI •

L'ANNO DELL' ERA SUA

D. C. I.

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THE SIXTH CENTENARY OF DANTE.

CHAPTER I.

Origin of the Dante Festival. Influence of the *Divina Commedia* on the sentiments of the Italians. Political events from 1859. Letter on the proposed Dante Festival in the Athenæum. First Commission in Florence 1860—1. Projected Pantheon and National Edition of Dante's works. Failure of these schemes.

Towards the close of 1858 great excitement prevailed in Germany with preparations for celebrating, in the autumn of the following year, a centenary festival in honour of the poet Schiller. The enthusiasm of the Germans, on this occasion, seems to have spread to the Italians, and to have suggested to them a similar national festival in honour of their poet Dante. That the first idea of a Dante Festival was thence derived, however improbable it may appear, is supported by the fact that it was proposed to hold it in the same year, 1859.

It is true, the political importance of Dante in having laid the foundation of Italian unity in his immortal *Divina Commedia*, was not then fully recognized, though his policy as regarded the Papacy was admitted, and his political convictions had so far become those of the great majority of his countrymen.

The divisions fomented and encouraged in Italy through the fatal existence of the Pope's temporal power, and the crushing weight of foreign forces which were in consequence brought to bear on that unhappy country, intentionally kept weak and thereby unable to resist its enemies, had tended more and more to confirm the Italians in the principles which Dante had implanted in their minds, and to convince them that their earliest, greatest, and wisest Poet, was also their best, and ablest politician. But they had not yet come to invoke his potent name as the founder of their national edifice.

The political changes in Italy which followed with convulsive rapidity from the early part of 1859, surpassed the expectations of the people. The campaign of victories from that of Montebello to the crowning success at Solferino, the flight of reigning princes who had degenerated into petty tyrants, the marvellous achievements of the heroic Garibaldi, and the successive annexations of Lombardy, Tuscany, Naples, Sicily, and Romagna, to the kingdom of Sardinia, and their amalgamation into the kingdom of Italy, all within the space of two years, outstript alike the intentions of French policy, and the hopes of Italian patriotism.

These events would, no doubt, have led to a national commemoration of Dante, had no Schiller festival furnished the first hint of it.

On December 25th, a letter appeared in the *Athenæum* from the pen of Dr. Barlow, the Dantophilist, which had the effect of changing the original intention as regarded the time for holding the proposed festival. It was shown that the year 1859 had no correspondence either with Dante's birth, or death, or any memorable event in his life, and had no claim whatever to be selected for a Dante commemoration; but that the year in which a great national festival in honour of the Poet should be held, not merely in Florence, which was then only the capital of Tuscany, but throughout all Italy, was 1865, the sixth centenary from his birth, and that on this occasion Italy would do herself honour and show that she was worthy to be the country of the greatest of European poets, by making this year a marked epoch in her annals. Florence, it was said, would, of course, be the scene of the grand national festival, and hither would the other Italian cities send their deputations, but there could be no reason why these should not each and all have their local commemoration also, without awakening the fears or jealousies of their governments, or giving cause for uneasiness to the stranger who watched over them.

"It would be chiefly", observed the writer, "as the great Christian poet and philosopher that Dante would receive this sixth centenary ovation, and in honouring him the Italians would be honouring themselves and their rulers also."

"Throughout the entire length and breadth of the Italian peninsula, from Monte Veso to Cape Passaro, one spirit should possess the Italian people on this occasion, and they should show that in Dante they are all united."

These words, written when Italy was a divided nation, and her rulers many, now read like a prophetic announcement, for they were literally fulfilled. Italy did send her deputations to Florence from all parts of the Peninsula, even from Rome, and Venice, and from other cities still in tribulation and longing for union under the Italian crown. The Italians did show that in Dante they were all united, even from Monte Veso to Cape Passaro. Sicily sent her honourable deputations to swell the ranks at this solemn gathering, and they came with their martial bands and their magnificent banners, to glorify the spirit of the Ghibelin poet in the elect city of his birth. The letter then went on to state that the month of May, near to the middle of the month, would be the proper time to hold this festival, and, as the actual day of Dante's birth was rather uncertain, the commemoration might begin on the 9th, and last till the 16th, which would be sure to include it.

Soon after this a Commission was formed at Florence in reference to the proposal; the apt appearance of the letter in the Athenæum had been admitted, and its advice acted upon. In 1860 this Commission consisted of the President of the Academy of the Fine Arts, Prince Ferdinand Strozzi, who was the head of it, the Cav. Guglielmo de' Pazzi, the Can. Comm. Brunone Bianchi, Prof. Atto Vannucci, Prof. Francesco dall' Ongaro, Prof. Cav. Giuseppe Barellai, Prof. Gilberto Govi, and the Secretary to the Academy, Prof. Paolo Emiliani-Giudici, who was secretary to the Commission.

These gentlemen put forth a programme in which it was proposed to convert the Piazza della Signoria into a National Pantheon, by continuing around it the Loggia of Orgagna, with statues of great men and wall paintings of heroic deeds, and the figure of Dante was to stand in the midst. Other festive doings were also contemplated, among them a quinquennial celebration, at which the best works on Science, Literature, and Art, produced in the mean time, were to be crowned with medals of honour. The funds requisite for these things were, in part, to be furnished by a grand, illustrated, National Edition of the Poet's works. This was to be published by subscription, in six handsome octavo volumes, of about 600 pages each, with a seventh, or supplementary volume, which was to form an Album, and to contain the names of the subscribers. The price was limited to 200 lire, or eight pounds sterling, exclusive of the carriage, one or two

volumes were to appear every year till the work was completed, and the subscribers were required to contribute, by anticipation, 40 lire, on or before the 1st of January 1861, as the expense at first starting was considerable.

Subsequently, the projected Pantheon became limited to the site of the Post-office, preparatory to disappearing quite; when, instead of this, a Temple in honour of Dante was proposed to occupy the highest point of the Boboli Gardens on the esplanade of the Fortezza di Belvedere. A broad street, bordered with handsome buildings, and stretching from the head of the Ponte Vecchio, where, in 1215, Buondelmonte received his mortal wound, across the gardens of the Convent of Santa Felicità, was to lead to the steps of this temple, intended to equal, if not to surpass, in architectural state, the glory of the Greek Acropolis. But the temple, and the street, and the buildings in it, followed the fate of the Pantheon, they all disappeared together, along with the National Edition of Dante's works, which was put off to a more convenient season when Rome should have become once more the capital of Italy. The baseless fabric of this vision did, however, leave *one* rack behind; the statue of Dante was saved from the general ruin, and having grown out of a germinal bust into the full developement of a well-formed man, eventually came forth as the fine colossal figure of the Poet in the Piazza of Santa Croce.

In the mean time much was expected from wealthy book-buyers in England, and the Italian Commissioners requested Dr. Barlow to become their Foreign Associate; Herr Trübner, "of the Row", consented to act as Agent, and, these preliminaries being settled, the programmes were sent forth, *nel modo Fiorentino*, with a flourish of trumpets, as follows:—

"To honour the memory of the first of European Poets, the most profound Philosopher, and far-seeing Statesman, whom the soil of Italy, fertile in illustrious leaders of European Civilization, during the Middle-ages produced—he who was in himself the very personification of that momentous period, and in giving to the Italians one language, one literature, and one great regenerating poem, coupling his mighty mind with the generations to come, laid the foundation of that Unity which the present age has been privileged to witness—to him—*Dante Allighieri*—grateful Italy has resolved to raise a monument worthy of the occasion," etc. etc.

But nothing came of all this notwithstanding. Some few well-wishers to Italy there were who requested their names to be put down as subscribers, and the noble Premier took the graceful lead; Viscount Palmerston alone, of all her Majesty's ministers written to, responded to the call, and had the work appeared, the Italians would have seen in him their warmest sympathizer and most earnest friend.

The first act of the proceedings in reference to the Sixth Centenary Festival of Dante Allighieri ended with an *exeunt omnes*, only one of the actors returned to take part in the second.

CHAPTER II.

Formation of the second, or Municipal, Commission for the celebration of Dante's Festival, 1863. *Giornale del Centenario*. Literary works undertaken on the occasion. Excitement in Florence, and preparations for the Festival. Inauguration of the *Mostra Dantesca* in the Pretorian Palace. The king presented with a sword in the name of Dante. Discourse of Prof. Augusto Conti.

On November 14th, 1863, at a meeting of the Florentine Council, after an eloquent speech from the Prior of the Comune, Emilio Frullani, it was resolved unanimously that, in May 1865, the Centenary of Dante Allighieri should be solemnly celebrated at Florence. A municipal commission was named at the same time, and its members were — the *Gonfaloniere* (the Senator De Cambray Digny) *President*, the Sen. Gino Capponi, *Vice President*, the Sen. Ferdinando Bartolommei, the Sen. Cosimo Ridolfi, the Avv. Cav. Emilio Frullani, the Professor for the time being of Dante in the Institute of Superior Studies (who was the Padre Giuliani), the Comm. Brunone Bianchi, the Cav. Pietro Fratticelli, and the Secretary, Guido Corsini.

The first literary forerunner of the appointed festival was the "*Giornale del Centenario di Dante Allighieri*"; a manifesto of which was put forth by Guido Corsini on December 15th, 1863.

It was to be published on the 10th, 20th, and last day of each month, from February 1864, to June 1865, and was to consist of an official part, in reference to the proceedings of the Florentine and other Municipalities of the

kingdom, and of a non-official part relating entirely to subjects connected with Dante.

On the 10th of February the first number appeared, in eight pages, small folio, announcing in solemn language —

"Prepara la Solennità Nazionale della Nascita di Dante."

It had a portrait of the Poet between a shield bearing the original arms of Florence, a white lily on a red ground (Parad. XVI., 152—4), which afterwards became the arms of the Ghibelins, and a shield with the arms of Savoy, a white cross on a red ground, the reverse of the ancient arms of the Florentine people, and now those of Italy, the whole bathed in rays of light from Dante's star, led by which Italy had thus arrived "*a glorioso porto*". It was followed in due order by its successors, and became a convenient medium of communication on the subject. In the Manifesto the Editor remarked, that the Municipality of Florence having decreed the celebration of Dante's Festival, as a national solemnity, it became a sacred duty of Italians, already associated in heart and mind with this necessary re-vindication of the past, to commemorate the occasion in the most splendid manner — "in as much as in this Centenary of Dante, Italy will celebrate not only the birth of the greatest (Christian) poet, but also the fruitful idea of the Italian *risorgimento* by him first presented and proclaimed, sustained and defended."

And, in fact, it was less to Dante the Poet, than to Dante the Patriot, that these honours were to be rendered; it was less for Dante the founder of Italian literature, and the father of the Italian language, than for Dante the founder of the true policy of the Italian nation, and the father of his country, that Italy flocked to the city of his birth to glorify the greatest of her sons. The Municipalities of Italy, after the initiation taken by that of Florence, fully conscious of the national importance of the occasion, with patriotic fervor took it up, and not only prepared to participate in the demonstration, but also contributed to the literature of the subject by many interesting publications.

Intellectual machines were put in motion along with material ones, and the activity of the former increased in proportion as the advent approached. Professors and printers, and public bodies, set to work in good earnest; books and brochures, from bulky volumes of considerable interest to broad-sides and fly leaves of little or none,

issued freely from the press, to stimulate curiosity, and gratify the literary tastes of all sorts of readers. Sonnets fell in showers, and biographical memoirs sprang up out of the ground. A Society of Letterati was formed to produce a work called "*Il secolo di Dante*", in which politics and science, literature and legends, were to appear side by side, a substitute, it would seem, for the National Edition of Dante's works which had previously been proposed. The monks of Montecassino put their types in order and set up the famous *Codice Cassinese* preserved in their archives. Prof. Luciano Scarabelli brought out, in five short months, a new edition of the Comment by *Jacopo della Lana*, and numerous other publications appeared, to which England, France, Germany, and America contributed, thus showing the far range of Dante students, the world-wide circle of the Poet's fame.

As the time for the Festival drew near, steamers and railways ran extra courses; excitement increased; preparations proceeded fast and furious; paper and printing rose to a premium; up, also, went all sorts of accommodation in Florence; the charges at hotels reached to a figure never before attained, and the terms of private lodgings mounted up in proportion. The arterial system was thrown into violent action, and the circulation much accelerated; nervous persons had their fears lest some catastrophe might follow, or a serious consequence happen. But Florence surmounted all her symptoms. There was a general disposition shown to make the very best of things, and turn the occasion to one of profit. Programmes of the festivities were published at all prices, from five centimes to a hundred. People who had anything to sell were proud to avail themselves of the Poet's patronage; placards bearing his name were seen stuck up everywhere; his medals and portraits filled the shopwindows; and his sacred head was made to recommend barrow-loads of brooches, pins, and buttons. Whatever was said, or sold, or done, had a reference to Dante.

The knights of the whip, who rarely regard any other order than their own, drove a flourishing trade, for them the golden age had surely come again; nor were their friends and accomplices, the *facchini*, behind them in practice. The felicitous occasion afforded for fleecing *forestieri* will never be forgotten.

And now fair Florence was filling fast, as the month sacred to Apollo and the Muses daily saw the god rising higher and higher in his luminous car. The Leghorn railway alone

brought upwards of 8000 visitors on the 12th and 13th, by the 14th nearly a hundred thousand were calculated to have arrived, and the names of the more important were published in a daily supplement to the *Messaggere dell' Arno*. Never did the evening promenade on the palatial border of the beautiful River, the *Lungo l'Arno*, present a more brilliant and animated scene; never were the walks and drives of the Cascine more crowded with pedestrians and elegant carriages. Other demonstrations also were going on elsewhere. A chorus of carpenters' hammers rang out their exhilarating notes through all the streets, and squares, and public places of the city. Illustrious men of old were rising up in effigy in all the "*cari luoghi*" to salute the coming day of Dante Allighieri; and where these did not answer to their names, inscriptions in their honour spoke their praises instead. Every historical house told its own tale, and in its own way; that of the Poet showed good intentions come rather too late, a demolished front hinted at future decorations, but there were none more substantial at present than flowers and festoons. But what is a house to him whose home is in the hearts of all his countrymen! He needs no temple made with hands to perpetuate his name, who, after six hundred years, is enshrined in every loyal living temple throughout the regenerated land. Men, however, are not immortals individually, and every generation, as it passes away, desires to leave to its successors some record of itself.

The King came in on the 12th, and on the following day, at noon, inaugurated the *Mostra Dantesca* in the Pretorian Palace: he was accompanied by the Baron Natoli, minister of Public Instruction, by the Count Nigra, minister of the Household, and by the Count Cambray Digny, president of the Provincial Council; the professor Augusto Conti, president of the Committee of the Dantesche Exposition, delivered the opening address; there was also the Marquis Brème, president of the Committee for the Mediæval Exhibition, and a crowd of senators and authorities, civil and military. Among the strangers present were M. Heppreau, the delegate of the Minister of Public Instruction in France, and MM. Mezières and Hillebrad, the representatives of the University of Paris. On this occasion, the King, much to his satisfaction, was presented by the Provincial Council, in the name of Dante, with a magnificent sword of wrought iron, the work of a young artificer, of Pescia, named Guidi. The blade

bore on one side the inscription: — "*Dante al primo re d'Italia*" — and on the other, the verses (Purg. VI., 112—4):

Vieni a veder la tua Roma che piagne,
Vedova, sola, e di' e notte chiama:
Cesare mio, perchè non m'accompagne?

The hilt was ornamented with allegorical representations of the Inferno and the Purgatory, and on the guard were the figures of Dante and Beatrice. Victor Emanuele received this memorial of the Festival with lively emotion, his eyes beamed with delight as he drew forth the polished blade, and gazed upon its edge with the talent of a connoisseur. It was a present his Majesty fully appreciated, and none other could have been so appropriate. After this, Prof. Conti read his address containing a short account of the history and formation of the collection, with a graceful allusion to France, Germany, England, and America which had, in part, contributed towards it. The King being conducted through the apartments, by the Commission and the Director of the Archives, Francesco Bonaini, expressed his admiration at the literary treasures which had there been brought together — Codici — rare editions — illustrations — works of art — and productions of the perennial literature of the Divina Commedia, and other works of Dante, from the earliest days of the printing art to the present. His Majesty then wrote his royal name in an album prepared for the purpose, which was subsequently signed by the rest of the company, and finally deposited in the Magliabechiana to be kept as a memorial of the event. The King, after that, mounted to the second story of the venerable palace, and visited the collection of the Mediæval works exhibited on this occasion, where the sword of Dante da Castiglione attracted his particular notice.

In the evening, in honour of Dante, there was an especial performance at the Theatre Niccolini of *Francesca da Rimini*, in which Adèle Ristori, Tommaso Salvini, and Ernesto Rossi sustained the principal parts.

On the eve of the grand Festival, the thronged state of the streets was surprising to witness. The City of the Baptist was like an immense bee-hive all in full buzz, and swarming within and without. People wondered at the multitude of devices and inscriptions everywhere conspicuous, and the residents were astonished to find so many dwellings on which they had never looked with interest before, to have claims on their regard which

could not be passed over. Where half the crowds laid their heads that night, on pillows, or floors, or harder couches still, or did not lay them anywhere at all, but carried them about on their own shoulders till the sun shone again on the summit of Santa Maria del Fiore, it matters not now, and did not much signify then, for the Italians are early risers, however late they may go to bed; a few hours sleep, or none, seem to satisfy them equally well, and those who got none on this occasion must have been the majority.

CHAPTER III.

Remarks on Order. The Official Guide Book and the notices it contained. Description of the Designs in the Piazza of Santa Croce to illustrate the life of Dante. Names of Expounders, Commentators, and Translators of the *Divina Commedia*. Inscriptions about the City.

Order, as sings an English poet, "is Heaven's first law": as is the law so is the law-giver. Dante had said, centuries before, that order is the image of the Creator in things created.

Le cose tutte quante

Hann' ordine tra loro; e questo è forma

Che l'universo a Dio fa simigliante. (Par. I., 103—5.)

Up to within a short time of the great day there had been so little of this divine principle apparent in the preparations at Florence for Dante's Festival, that a compatriot of the English poet might almost have fancied himself at home. But as the pleasant city grew gayer and gayer with gonfallons, and flags, and shields blazoned about in the brightest colours, the arms of her ancient guilds, and former associates in republican strife; as the devices of her cunning craftsmen, and trophies and inscriptions to her illustrious sons were multiplied, and the last subject of the Poet's life in the Piazza of Santa Croce received its finishing touches, then, when the labours of the diligent were about to receive their reward in the admiring approval of their fellow citizens, whatever shortcomings there may have been, inseparable from all human undertakings, in Florence none were visible, for all had done their best to make Dante's Festival an honour to

their country. Moved by one sentiment, animated by one soul, whose force was concentrated in certain Commissions and Committees, Italians, with persevering activity, out of a seeming chaos of conflicting elements, had produced order, beauty, and harmony of design.

The "*Guida Ufficiale per le Feste del Centenario di Dante Alighieri*",* a brochure of 58 pages, clad in the cheering colour of green, had come forth in good time to quiet uneasy forebodings, and satisfy serious inquiries. With a dantesche spirit worthy of its title, it saluted the Poet in the words addressed by him to Beatrice —

"O luce, o gloria della gente umana!"

and expected all loyal Dantophilists to respond — Amen. It then proceeded to justify this application in language rather foreign to our English idiom.

"Dante is a name (*è nome*) not Italian only, but European, we might almost say universal; so that in celebrating the memorial of it, homage is rendered to the whole human race. 'Dante, creator of the catholic epic' (as the great sub-alpine philosopher, Vincenzo Gioberti, has said) 'is a writer at once Italian and cosmopolite. The first-born of that language which is the first-begotten among the illustrious affiliated idioms dating from the days of Christianity, he is the founder of Italian and of European Literature, and, along with these, of the modern sciences, the fine arts, and of every generous culture of the human mind. The *Divina Commedia* is properly the dynamic principle from which the intellectual civilization of the Christian nations took its rise, and whose beneficent influences are coextensive with our species, so that every distinguished writer and artist who may have risen from the past Christianity of modern peoples, and who, in due time, may arise from the future, is the legitimate offspring of Dante.'" (*Del Bello*, cap. X., p. 433.)

This was taking a very high tone, and the remainder of the preface was in harmony with it. No Festival ever had been, nor ever could be, more universally national than the one about to be celebrated, whose political im-

* It is much to be regretted that on so solemn an occasion the Florentines should have persisted in their questionable practice of abstracting an *l* from the Poet's *casato*, contrary to the general usage of Italy, and one of the best evidences that it is wrong — the facsimile copy of Dante's autograph.

portance and solemnity had been increased by six centuries of fraternal discords and imposing tyrannies, and at any other time would have come off as a mere civic show, a shadow without a substance, unworthy of the name, in which the citizens of civilized nations could have taken no sympathetic part, and only the children of the soil would have assisted at its celebration. It concluded with these words:—

“And if the work of national regeneration be not yet complete, we behold, at least, an earnest of its approaching and happy consummation in this reunion of Italians in one thought, one sentiment, and one most holy name, the name of the precursor of the unity and freedom of Italy, Dante Allighieri.”

After an historical sketch of the Piazza, where the chief function was to take place, the unveiling of the statue of Dante, a very accurate account was given by the *Guida* of the preparations which had there been made for the solemnity. The Municipality had decreed—

ART. 1. “The piazza of Santa Croce, where will be inaugurated the National Monument to Dante, shall be richly adorned with festoons of laurel and flowers interwoven in trophies, with pictorial decorations of subjects from the life of Dante, and with epigraphs relating to them.”

These pictures, in a sort of neutral tint to imitate sculpture, were thirty-eight in number, they occupied the upper part of the enclosure of the amphitheatre, alternately with forty portraits, in the same style, of expounders, commentators, translators, and biographers. The subjects were as follow, beginning at the N.W. angle—

1. Dante at the age of nine years is conducted by his father to the house of Portinari where he meets with Beatrice then eight years of age, 1274.
2. Dante, in the street, meets Beatrice between two ladies, is saluted by her, and returns her salute, 1283.
3. Brunetto Latini, the preceptor of Dante, gives him his book entitled *il Tesoro*, with a recommendation of it, 1284.
4. Carlo Martello, son of Charles II, king of Apuglia, during his sojourn in Florence, forms a friendship with Dante, 1289.

5. Return of Dante to Florence after the battle of Campaldino, where he fought on horseback, 1289.
6. Dante, as one of the Florentine cavalry, is present at the surrender of the Castle of Caprona, 1289.
7. At the anniversary of the death of Beatrice, two distinguished persons pay Dante a visit while he is occupied in drawing on a board.*
8. Dante in his villa of Camorata in company with his literary and poetic friends, 1292.
9. Dante in the *studio* of Cimabue along with Oderigi of Gubbio, Arnolfo †, and the youthful Giotto, 1294.
10. Dante elected by the corporation of Physicians and Apothecaries to take part in the *Capitudini*, 1295.**
11. Dante, as ambassador of the Comune, at S. Gimignano, to confirm the guelfic contribution, 1299.
12. Dante, as Prior of the Signoria, in the Council of the Hundred, discussing public affairs, 1300.
13. Dante along with the other Priors, and with the Gonfaloniere, goes in procession to the Church of San Giovanni, June 23, 1300.
14. Dante one of the ambassadors dispatched to Boniface VIII. to dissuade him from sending Charles of Valois to Florence, 1301.
15. The houses of Dante, already condemned to exile, are devastated by the Guelphs, and in part set on fire, 1302.
16. Dante at the University of Bologna along with his friend Giovanni del Virgilio, 1305.
17. Dante in the congress of Ghibelins held in the Abbatial Church of San Gaudenzio at the foot of the Alps, 1306.
18. Dante the guest in Lunigiana of the Marchesi Maroello and Franceschino Malaspina, 1306.
19. Dante, ambassador of the Marchesi Malaspina to the Bishop of Luni, concludes the peace between them and him, 1306.
20. Dante at Arezzo, one of the twelve councillors of the Ghibelins, of whom the count Alessandro da Romena was the captain, 1302.

* The *Guida* did not tell its readers the subject of Dante's design, it should have added — "the figure of an angel".

† Arnolfo di Lapo, who designed and erected the church of Santa Croce, the foundation stone of which was laid May 3, 1294.

** In other words — to take part in the meetings of the consuls elected by the several guilds or *Arti*.

21. Dante consigns to the friar Ilario, Prior of Santa Croce del Corvo, the first cantica of his poem to be sent to Uguccione della Faggiola, 1309.
22. Dante sustains a grand theological and philosophical disputation in the University of Paris, 1310.
23. Dante in Milan renders homage to the Emperor Henry VII., king of the Romans, 1311.
24. Dante, along with the Conti Guidi and the Colonnese, at the coronation of the Emperor in San Giovanni Laterano, June 16, 1312.
25. Bosone Raffaelli di Gubbio receives Dante in his castle of Colmollaro, 1313.
26. Dante residing at the monastery of the Camaldolese Order of Santa Croce di Fonte Avellana, 1313—14.
27. Dante at Lucca with Uguccione della Faggiola, 1311.
28. Dante, from an elevated position, observes below, near the torrent Nievole, the battle of Montecatini, 1315.
29. Pisa and Lucca having been lost, Uguccione della Faggiola, along with his son Neri, and Dante, betake themselves to Lunigiana, 1316.
30. Dante at the court of Cane Scaligero in Verona, presents to him the first ten cantos of his Paradise with the dedication of this Cantica, 1316.
31. Giotto at Padua, painting the chapel of Sant' Antonio, receives his friend Dante into his house, 1317.
32. Dante sustains a philosophical thesis in the chapel of Sant' Elena at Verona, in the presence of the clergy of the city, 1320.
33. Guido da Polenta, signor of Ravenna, receives Dante into his palace, 1320.
34. Dante at Ravenna presents to Guido his friend Giotto who receives a commission to paint there certain pictures, 1320.
35. Dante before the Senate at Venice as ambassador from Guido da Polenta, 1321.
36. The death of Dante at Ravenna, September 14, 1321.
37. The funeral cortege with which Guido da Polenta accompanies the corpse of Dante to its sepulchre in the church of the Frati Minori, 1321.

One or two of these subjects were of rather an apocryphal character, as the second, and seventh, and the ninth. That Dante, Oderigi, and Giotto may have met in the *bottega* of Cimabue, is very probable, but that Dante was a pupil of Cimabue along with Oderigi, who died before 1300, is most improbable. The portraits placed alternately with the pictures were —

XIV. CENT. 1. Jacopo della Lana; 2. Pietro Allighieri; 3. Jacopo Allighieri; 4. Matteo Tronto; 5. Giovanni Boccaccio; 6. Francesco da Buti; 7. Benvenuto da Imola; 8. Filippo Villani.

XV. CENT. 9. Guiniforto Bargigi; 10. Leonardo Bruni; 11. Cristoforo Landino.

XVI. CENT. 12. Antonio Manetti; 13. Alessandro Vellutelli; 14. Gio. Battista Gelli; 15. Lodovico Dolce; 16. Benedetto Varchi; 17. Bernardino Daniello; 18. Vincenzio Buonanni; 19. Jacopo Mazzoni.

XVIII. CENT. 20. Francesco Cionacci; 21. Gio. Antonio Volpi; 22. Pompeo Venturi; 23. Giuseppe Pelli; 24. Jacopo Dionisi; 25. Baldassare Lombardi.

XIX. CENT. 26. Giosafatte Biagioli; 27. Antonio Renzi; 28. Antonio Cesare; 29. Ferdinando Arrivabene; 30. K. L. Kannegiesser; 31. Ugo Foscolo; 32. Henri Francis Cary; 33. Paolo Costa; 34. Luigi Portirelli; 35. Gio. Giacomo Trivulzio; 36. Colomb De Batines; 37. Gabriele Rossetti; 38. F. R. de Lamennais; 39. Cesare Balbo; 40. Alessandro Torri.

The Municipality had also decreed —

ART. 2. "The city shall be decorated with flags. To the houses where the most famous citizens were born, lived, or worked, shall be attached their names adorned with trophies, laurels and flowers."

Fading memorials these, suggestive of the Poet's verses (Purg. XI., 115—7), and carrying their moral with them —

La vostra nominanza è color d'erba,
Che viene e va, e quei la discolora,
Per cui ell' esce della terra acerba.

But, as the *Guida* very justly observed, if all the glorious memories of Florence were to be recorded by inscriptions, there would scarcely be a single stone that did not merit an especial notice.

The next decree of the Municipality was —

ART. 3. "The streets traversed by the procession, as also some of the principal squares of the city, shall be embellished with columns, statues, and trophies in memory of the most illustrious facts of Italian history, and of the individuals who have rendered themselves cele-

brated in letters, science, and art, both civil and military. The portico of the Uffizi shall be elegantly ornamented."

This also was done, and the liberality of the authorities was set down at twenty thousand pounds, or half a million of francs.

The *Guida* has preserved a series of the inscriptions. One or two shall be noticed. Commencing at the Piazza Santo Spirito, there was a long inscription in the Via Maggio in honour of *Cosimo de' Marchesi Ridolfi* who was born here, and died March 6, 1865; he was an illustrious benefactor to his country, and, as a minister of state, "*volle instaurata la cattedra di Dante in Firenze*". Here also lived the friend of Dante, *Dino di Lambertuccio Frescobaldi*, who, as reported, sent to him, in 1307, the first seven cantos of the *Inferno*, which had been found among the Poet's papers. (See Boccaccio, *Vita di Dante*, and *il Commento*.) These, however, could not by any possibility have been the first seven cantos as we have them now, but were probably, as Balbo has suggested, the original ones in latin. (See "*Vita di Dante*", cap. VI.) At the Ponte Santa Trinita there was an inscription to the noble *Piero Capponi*. In the Piazza (rather out of place) one to *Buondelmonte*; also one to the English emigrant *Robert Dudley* "*matimatico e cosmografo del secolo XVII, che giovò con le scienze al paese che l'ospitava*". At Santa Maria Maggiore, Dante's preceptor, *Brunetto Latini*, was not forgotten, nor his companion in the grave, *Salvino degli Armati*, the inventor of spectacles. In the Piazza del Duomo, near the Campanile, was buried the magnanimous *Farinata degli Uberti*, and the verses of the Poet (*Inf. X., 91—3*) were quoted in his praise. The Baptistery, and Santa Maria del Fiore, both came in for a due share of verbal commemoration, and a comparison was made between the still unfinished façade of the latter, after "*three centuries of splendid tyranny*", and the "*redemption of Italy, in the name of the divine Allighieri*", after *six*. The *Sasso di Dante* had no special record; a bust of the Poet, beneath a tabernacle raised on a shaft, with mosaic work much in the same style as the windows of the Duomo opposite, had here been set up, but the motto: "*Onorate l'altissimo Poeta*", was omitted. The place where the Carroccio used to stand before the day of battle was also noticed, though no attempt had been made to reproduce the sacred Palladium itself. In the Via del

Proconsolo the *Conti Guidi* were alluded to in the person of *Guido Guerra*. (Inf. XVI., 37—9.) And, a little farther on, the residence was marked of Giovanni and Filippo Villani, the celebrated Florentine chroniclers who, holding with the party Guelph, justly honoured in their writings "*Il gran Ghibellino*". At the entrance to the Piazza Santa Croce was the following most appropriate inscription:

*Italiani
Onorate l'altissimo Poeta
l'omaggio che rendete a lui
vendica l'oblio di sei secoli
e attesta al mondo
che siete nazione.*

There was one other memorial also, which, if omitted here, the offence against good manners would probably never be forgiven either in the Paradise of Dante, or any other.

In the Corso, near to the *Canto dei Pazzi*, where was the first gate of the second circle of the Florentine walls, called the *Porta maestra di S. Piero*, opposite to the *Borgo degli Albizzi*, lived Folco Portinari, and here first saw the light his daughter *Beatrice*, who became the wife of Messer Simone de' Bardi.

The following inscription records the event:

*O voi che per la via d'amor passate
volgete uno sguardo alle mura
ove nacque nell' aprile del 1266
Beatrice Portinari
prima e purissima fiamma
che accese il genio
del Divino Poeta
Dante Alighieri.*

This is not the place to dispute such delicate matters as the *Vita Nuova* professes to treat of; but the "*Porta di San Pietro*" mentioned by the Poet, Inf. I., 134, was the gate so called on the east side of the third enclosure, the walls of which, on the right bank of the Arno, were nearly quadrangular.

CHAPTER IV.

The first day of the Festival, May 14th, the birth-day of Dante. Honours rendered to him, how deserved. Remarks on the *Divina Commedia*. Marsilio Ficino and Cristoforo Landino. Incidents of the Morning. The Assembling in the Piazza of Santo Spirito, and the Procession to the Piazza of Santa Croce.

The 14th of May, 1865, will ever be a memorable day in the annals of Italy, a sacred day among the *Fasti* of all civilized nations. On the 14th of May, six hundred years before, when the sun had entered the constellation *gemini*, was born in the Athens of Italy, to the noble family of the Aldighieri, a branch of the more ancient Roman family of the Elisei, a son destined in future ages to draw upon himself the admiration of Europe and the World,

*Dante d'Aldighieri degli Aldighieri poeta Fiorentino.**

Now that the six hundred years were past, honours, which ere the dawn of Christianity would have been deemed divine, were rendered by a nation to his memory. Never was mortal man more worthy of a people's reverence; never was there one more deserving of universal veneration. To have had the privilege to join with the Italians on this great day, will be a life-long source of satisfaction to those strangers, whose love and admiration for the Poet drew them, on this occasion, to his native city — "*Fiorenza mia*" — of whose honour he had been so jealous, and whose ingratitude he so deeply felt.

Dante, as a leader in the Florentine government, had tried in vain to tame the speckled *Lonza*, in vain to wrestle with the roaring *Lion*, in vain to strangle the voracious *Wolf*. Directed by an overruling Providence, he turned his better genius into a wiser course, one which in God's good time would reach the happy goal, "*il diletto Monte*" of the Patriot's hopes. This was that "*altra via*" which his poetic intelligence counselled, and divine inspiration prompted. The *Divina Commedia* was taken up, and continued with persevering labour to its close. To this he devoted all his energy, all his profound learning, all his vast experience, all his talents. In laying the foundation of Italian and European literature in the living illustrated history of the human soul,

* The Poet's signature in the Matriculation Book of the *Sesta dell' Arti maggiori*.

its sufferings, its sorrows, its hopes, and its joys, Dante built upon that moral and religious principle of the conformity of the human will to the Divine, which is the corner stone of our Christian civilization, the object of all spiritual training, and the sole source of present and future felicity.

Dante's great poem is to the Italians not only a manual of morality and theology, and a text-book of political principles, but a mirror in which they are themselves reflected. His life was the life of the Italian middle-ages, the history of a nation summed up in one man. Dante is the type of a whole people, the personification of Italy itself, when Italy was the centre of European civilization, literature, science, and art. But whatever special relations the *Divina Commedia* may have to the Italians, it is, and ever will be, to every pilgrim soul who takes it for his guide, a veritable hand-book of the way to Heaven. Hence our debt of gratitude to the Poet can never be repaid, for it is a debt which will go on increasing to the end of time, augmenting with the revolutions of our planet, and growing with the growth of the nations who spread themselves over its surface, for the hopes and aspirations of our race will never alter, any more than its duties and obligations can ever change.

When the exiled Ghibelin was no more, Florence did not even then repent of her rigour; the Poet's death, it would seem, did not immediately soften the hearts of the Florentines. "Niuna compassione ne mostrò alcuno," says Boccaccio, "niuna pubblica lagrima gli fu concessuta, nè alcuno uffizio funebre fatto." But the next generation regarded the Poet more favourably, and, ere fifty years had passed, Florence resolved, as best she could, to honour his memory. But it was then too late to obtain his remains. Ravenna would not part with what Florence coveted. Political passions allayed, and ancient animosities extinguished, "Firenze fece di Dante quasi un nume, e per placare l'ombra sua, tuttavia tremenda, lo sanctificò, ponendo un decreto che il Poema sacro fosse letto e spiegato ne' tempi." * And so it was, not in Florence only, but in other cities also, for Dante, "*Florentinus natione non moribus*", was of all Italy the Italian supreme. Florence sought to satisfy her conscience by the posthumous honours she rendered to the Poet. But the honour which,

* Melchiorre Missirini: *Vita di Dante*. 1844.

while living, he would fain have received, she had ungenerously withheld.

Se mai continga che il poema sacro,
 Al quale ha posto mano e cielo e terra,
 Sì che m' ha fatto per più anni macro,
 Vinca la crudeltà, che fuor mi serra
 Del bello ovile, ov' io dormii agnello
 Nimico a' lupi, che gli danno guerra,
 Con altra voce omai, con altro vello
 Ritornero poeta, ed in sul fonte
 Del mio battesimo prenderò il cappello.

(Parad. XXV., 1—9.)

These verses which came to light only after Dante's decease, while they show the cherished hope of the Poet to the last, tell also of the immense love he still bore his native city, which had loved him so little in return — "*parvi Florentia mater amoris*".

Marsilio Ficino, in the letter prefixed to Landino's Edition of the Divina Commedia, 1481, speaks, poetically it would seem, of Dante's bust having been solemnly crowned with laurel where he himself had desired to receive that honour, so that the Poet's prediction was, in a manner, fulfilled. The Canonico Moreni, in the preface to his edition of the Life of Dante by Mario Filelfo, p. XXIX, alludes to this as if it had actually taken place, remarking, "su di che semble essersi, per così dire, avverato ciò, che lo stesso poeta immaginato si era". But chroniclers are silent on the subject, and Dante's biographers say nothing about it. Landino's Edition of the *poema sacro*, the first which had been published in Florence, appears to have been the magic mirror in which Marsilio Ficino saw the ceremony take place, good old Cristoforo himself being the conjurer on this occasion.

Had Marsilio Ficino been living now, he might well have exulted as he did then.*

* The Italian version of this curious epistle begins thus — "Firenze lungo tempo dolente: ma finalmente lieta, sommamente si congratula col suo poeta Danthe nel fine di due secoli risuscitato: et restituito nella patria sua: Et gloriosamete già coronato O Danthe mio nel tempo che riposto nello iniquo exilio predicesti nel tuo poema sacro / quando la pieta vincessi la crudelta: la quale ti serrava fuori del tuo ovile allhora torneresti in patria molto piu ornato che prima: et nello excelso tepio del Baptista prenderesti degnamete la corona poetica. Non fu ivano questo tuo prevedere. Ma perche dal paradiso sommo predicesti questo / pero con verita lo predicesti. Concio-sia chel tuo padre Apollo ad misericordia commosso dellungo exilio tuo et pianto mio / commisse a Mercurio in

The sun rises on Florence, the capital of Italy, beautiful as a bride adorned for her husband, while all the pomp and circumstances of civil, military, and regal splendour are combined to render this first truly National Festival worthy of the name.

Never had there been a union of all the fifty-nine provinces of the kingdom before, and with them on this occasion were present those also of Rome, Venice, Istria, and Trieste, the two latter provinces being strictly Italian, as the *Italica favella* of the people shows.

From an early hour in the morning the dense population were on the alert. The measured tramp of martial feet, and the clatter of cavalry trotting to their stations, with the beating of drums and the clangor of trumpets, sounded the first notes of preparation, and told of what was to follow.

The National Guard was under arms at six in the morning, and the deputations and others, who were to take part in the inauguration of Dante's statue, were required to assemble in the Piazza of Santo Spirito not later than half-past seven. At eight, on the signal given by the great bell of the Palazzo Vecchio, the procession was to set out preceded by a troop of cavalry. The general order to be observed was —

Representatives of the Italian press.

Provinces in alphabetical order.

Strangers.

Commission for the Monument to Dante.

Commission for the Festivals of the Centenary.

Municipalities of Ravenna and Florence.

Military representatives in uniform.

The cortege was to proceed to the Piazza of Santa Croce by the Via dei Michelozzi — Via Maggio — the Ponte Santa Trinita, the Via Tornabuoni — Via de' Rondinelli — Via de' Cerretani — the Piazza del Duomo on the south side — Via del Proconsolo — Via del Palagio — and the Via del Fosso.

The great bulk of this vast gathering consisted of the

questi tempi: che subito volassi nella mente pia del divino poeta christophoro landino et trasformato nell' imagine del suo volto uscissi la miracola verga ad renderti la vita. Et l'alie anchora ad riportarti in patria tua: et oltra questo l'apollinea fronde ad coronarti etc. etc..... Levate cittadini. levate gl'occhi in alto. Ecco mentre che si corona el nostro Danthe s'apre sopra di noi el cielo empireo. Et per mostrare letitia di tal coronatione mostra a gl'occhi nostri el mirabile suo splendore non mai piu per altri tēpi visti...etc...etc."

representatives of the Italian provinces, including not only the Deputies, but also the Municipalities, the Provincial Councils, the Universities, Colleges, Lyceums, Academies, the Societies of Mutual Succour, Charitable Institutions, and Schools of technical science. And a pleasant thing it was to witness the vivacity of these parties, with their music and ensigns, wending their way betimes to the place of meeting watched with interest by many a lively group of elegantly dressed women fresh and beautiful from their early toilets as the May-morning itself. And when the multitudinous assemblage filled with a gorgeous confusion the Piazza of Santo Spirito,

"Vi faceva un incognito indistinto,"

out of which it seemed that nothing less than a miracle could extricate an orderly procession and send it forth at the time appointed. Here seven hundred ensigns and standards of bright colours and costly materials, nearly all of them embroidered expressly for the Festival, were clustered together in glowing community; and with the glittering arms and accoutrements of the National Guards and the Royal troops who assisted, and the military costumes of the numerous bands, relieved and heightened by the black evening-dress worn by most of the civilians, an effect was produced which those who saw it will not soon forget.

X It was nearer nine than eight before the procession, preceded by a troop of Lancers and a company of Grenadiers, debouched from the Piazza, to the thunder of the cannon from the fortress of St. John the Baptist, the patron of the City.

The day was superb — the blue Italian sky shone down serenely bright between the lofty palaces, and the gay flag of Italy, symbolic of the Christian virtues, and of the National character, spread its broad bosom to the balmy air in festive harmony. The houses and balconies were decked with rich silk draperies dipt in rainbow-tints, the windows were filled with animated faces, and the streets were thronged with thoughtful, joyous crowds. For although the material part of this imposing spectacle was magnificent, yet its moral and political meaning far exceeded its external splendour. It went to the heart while it delighted the eye. Here moved along with slow and solemn pace to the thrilling music of incessant bands, beneath a waving forest of beautiful banners, the representatives of all that Italy delights to call her own — Principals and Professors of her learned Universities;

Mayors, Syndics, Magistrates; men of science, literature, and art, the most distinguished; Senators, Deputies, and Citizens of every grade, and of every province and town in the kingdom; Judges, Lawyers, Physicians, Actors, and Artists; here walked Ristori, graceful as a queen, between Salvini and Rossi; here the Conte Serego Allighieri, the descendant of Dante; here the Senator Centofanti, Principal of the University of Pisa, the eloquent expounder of the recondite philosophy of the Poet; here walked the Hungarian Pulszky, here Bixio, and a host of other notables. A fine tall burly Friar, with a flowing beard, marched boldly along, bearing a grand national flag, amid spontaneous cheers of universal popularity, he represented the Church emancipation Society of Neapolitan priests. A Garibaldian officer, carrying the flag of the commune of Melazzo, was also the object of a passing ovation. Rome and Venice, with their ensigns in mourning, were received with continued *vivas* of sympathetic acclamation; Trieste and Istria also came in for a share of fraternal applause, and the presence of Turin was hailed with grateful acknowledgements.↓

Yet this was by no means a noisy procession, the shouts were comparatively few, the solemnity seemed too deeply full of meaning, and too profoundly felt, for mere passing excitement. Those few present who may have walked in the procession of Sunday, September 12, 1847, when Florence went to thank the Grand Duke for conceding a National Guard, and in which the English took a prominent part, must have been struck with the comparative silence on this occasion; in fact, the sentiment now embodied was too great for utterance, many seemed scarcely to understand it, while others found relief only in tears. Eighteen years of political events have made a vast difference in the character of the Italians: in rising, as they have done, to the dignity of a great nation, they have become, as it was necessary that they should, a people of action and less of demonstration.

The National Guards kept the line of route, and fell in as the cortege passed. There was no better point of view for seeing it than from the steps of the Palazzo del Comune, where the Municipalities of Ravenna and of Florence, and the Commissions for the Festival and for the Monument, joined the procession. The dazzling splendour of the sun shining on the gay and glittering ranks as they passed over the Ponte Santa Trinita in full blaze of light, contrasted with the subdued tone when they

entered the cool and pleasant shade cast between the Palace and its opposite neighbours, produced a fine and very pictorial effect. It was here that the English Dantophilist, Dr. Barlow, by especial permission of the Gonfaloniere, joined the procession, in company with the Commission for the monument, facetiously remarking, that, after all, this was his proper place, as he had been for twenty years and more a devoted follower of Dante, and here was borne the banner bearing Dante's honoured name. Attached to the left breast of a dress-coat the Dr. wore a *foreign decoration*! — Let it not rouse the jealous spirit of the British Lion, that anything so forbidden by the "*regulations*" should ever have been done. The decoration consisted of a small photograph of the Poet within a rosette of the National colours, which a gentle hand in Florence had fashioned for the occasion, and was significantly styled by the wearer, 'the Ribbon of the Most Noble Empyrical Order of Dante Alighieri and United Italy'. As such it had some advantage over other decorations, for it needed no explanation of what its meaning and purpose might be, which is more than can be said of orders in general, and in this light the constellations of brilliant stars and shining crosses that dazzled ones eyes on the uniforms of many a great personage present, were not worthy to be compared with it. But neither his Majesty, Victor Emanuele, nor his Ministers, would hear of a new Order, and so that of Saint Dante must now stand over until the next Centenary.*

The patriotic gathering of the Italian population from all parts of the Peninsula, was felt to be a pledge of the security of the future destinies of their Mother Country, and mingled with the emotion of this profound sentiment, was the universal gleam of inward joy which the conviction inspired. Actors and spectators

* It may not be improper to state, however, that before Dr. Barlow left Florence, the King, at the recommendation of the Minister of Public Instruction, nominated him a Cavalier of the Order of the Saints Maurice and Lazarus, an honour of which the Minister begged his acceptance as a public mark of the esteem in which the Italian Government held his labours in the field of Dante Literature. Two other British subjects, Lord Vernon, than whom no one was more deserving of this distinction, and Mr. Seymour Kirkup, of Florence, to whom Dantophilists are indebted for the preservation of the Poet's house, the discovery of his portrait by Giotto, and other services rendered, were also created Cavaliers at the same time. A compliment so flattering to the British Nation deserved a courteous recognition on the part of the Government, and ought to have received it, — but there were the *red tape "regulations"*!!! (See Appendix.)

shared in it alike. The mighty stream moved on amid such multitudes as Florence had not seen before within her walls. Here was the consummation of a nation's hopes, and of a Poet's teaching. Six short centuries had wrought this wondrous change, the lessons learnt had brought their own reward. The great family of the Italian people were this day united in one affection and in one desire. It was eleven o'clock before the rear of the procession, brought up by the officers of the provincial National Guards, reached the Piazza of Santa Croce; and ere all were fairly in their places, a universal shout announced the arrival of the King.

CHAPTER V.

Brief history of the Piazza of Santa Croce. Description of the Amphitheatre erected for the solemnity. The gathering of the spectators. The Arrival of the Procession. Presence of the King and court. Speech of the Gonfaloniere, and the uncovering of the Monument.

The Piazza of Santa Croce has followed the fortunes of Florence and of Italy. From the days when it was a mere alluvial island of mud and silt, around which the wayward waters of the Arno wandered as if unwilling to forsake their early haunts, and the pious hands of Christian pastors planted there a chapel of the Holy Cross, ere the third circle of the city walls had been raised along its western border, to the days when the hillock being levelled, and the rushing stream constrained by embankments to keep within due bounds, a noble piazza was here formed, in shape and size well suited to popular meetings and courtly pageants, and the humble chapel gave place to a stately church consecrated to the great and noble spirits whose earthly transit had enlightened their age and country, from those days to our own when the Piazza of Santa Croce has become the nucleus, so to speak, of a great nation, a place doubly sanctified by the past and the present, not all the political unions, pompous tournaments, and public spectacles which it had witnessed, ever equalled, in intensity of interest and significance of purpose, the all-engrossing national solemnity of this 14th of May. And the reason is, on this day, for the first time in the annals of modern history, the Italian nation

came together as one man. Morally and politically considered nothing could be more glorious than this fact, nor did the material part of the Festival fall short of its intrinsic importance. The order of the Ceremony as officially declared was — A grand symphony — Speech of the Gonfaloniere — Uncovering the Monument of Dante — Address of the Cav. Prof. G. B. Giuliani — Hymn to Dante written by G. Corsini, and set to music by M. C. Romani, during which the notary of the Comune will register the solemn act. After which those Representatives who should desire to leave their banners to the city of Florence were directed to take them into the Cloister of Santa Croce where the Gonfaloniere would receive them.

The Piazza of Santa Croce contains nearly fifty-thousand square feet, and in the fitting up of this space the Municipality had shown a munificence worthy of the occasion. The Piazza, exclusive of a narrow passage on the north and south sides, was transformed into a spacious amphitheatre. The central portion, around the statue of Dante, was reserved for royalty, and for those who had to take prominent parts in the ceremony. Behind them, on ten rows of raised steps, stood the great army of representatives and deputations, with their ensigns, gonfalons, and banners. A parapet in compartments surmounted by the various armorial bearings of the guilds, ancient and modern; with those of Florence, a red lily on a white ground; of the People, a red cross on a white ground; of the Comune, parted per pale red and white, symbolic of the union of Florence and Fiesole in 1010; and those of the principal *quartieri* of the city, enclosed this portion of the erection. Beyond, on the right, was a raised and inclined platform divided into two sections of reserved seats, for the ladies and privileged guests. On the left was a larger space set apart for the people, to which all persons decently dressed were admitted. In front of the Church a stage had been erected for the choir and musicians, and here were congregated the numerous bands. The whole of this temporary amphitheatre was surrounded by a high wooden parapet, over which were suspended festoons of laurel, the gay gonfalons of the principal cities in Italy, forty in number, floated above. On this parapet were represented the thirty-seven scenes from the life of Dante, alternately with the forty portraits, already noticed. At the sides of these portraits were the arms of the eighty Tuscan communes in alphabetical order, beginning with

Anghiari, and ending with Volterra; beneath which were the arms of the principal Municipalities of Italy.

Near to the centre of the boarded floor covered with green baize, was a dais richly carpeted for the King and court. Here, between two dwarf columns, surmounted by vases with choice flowers, and from which a *solecchio* was suspended, was placed the royal chair supported by two gilt lions couchant. There were a few other chairs on each side of it for the Ministers, but neither these, nor the damask-covered stools which had been provided for the court party, were made use of: his Majesty did not sit down once, nor did the Royal head care to protect itself from the Italian sun. Behind the throne, a lofty stem, like to the mast "of some great Ammiral", bore the royal ensign; and from similar flag-staves, at the four corners of the Piazza, floated the gonfalons of Rome and Venice, on the west, of Ravenna and Florence on the east.

The effect was splendid; the sensation great. The venerable Church of Santa Croce, with its elegant marble façade, shone like an old friend with a new face. The orchestra of vocal and instrumental music was closely packed. At the sides the serried ranks of representatives stood firm beneath a gorgeous canopy of brilliant banners. In the rear, on the south side, or right hand, the beauty and fashion of Florence clustered together like fairest gifts of May on flowery banks —

Depinte di mirabil primavera.

While on the left the long expectant public waited with patience to witness the event.

In the midst of this magnificent spectacle, a mountain of white drapery concealed beneath its ample folds the image of Him whom all Italy had assembled to honour.

It was now eleven o'clock; when, as the last files of the long procession took up their appointed stations, reiterated *vivas* announced the presence of the King, and a sudden influx of military and official costumes mingled among the sober suits of sable.

Victor Emanuele wore a General's uniform, and was attended by La Marmora, with the other Ministers, the Diplomatic Corps, and a numerous suit. The most remarkable figure, however, not only for the part he acted but also for the dress he had on, was the Count Cambray Digny, the worthy Gonfaloniere, metamorphosed into a mediæval functionary whom few could recognize. "At this moment", writes a witness of the scene from a

window in the Piazza, "the panorama baffles description, I repeat, by its glow, its picturesque accessories and groupings, its concourse of glad hearts, its feast of gay colours. The poor, earnest, severe Poet! And all this, in his honour, some five hundred years and more since he passed away, carrying with him to his grave aching thoughts of Fate's injustice and Man's ingratitude!"* But those who were taking part in the proceedings below found no place in their hearts for other than exulting sentiments. Truly this day the spirit of the Divine Allighieri was more than compensated for all its earthly sufferings! The scene was indeed sublime, and, like all intense excitement, short in its duration. His Majesty, however, appeared cool and collected, though it was evident his great soul was moved with the magnitude and moral importance of the solemnity: *Il Rè Galantuomo* looked thoughtfully around, as he stood erect, resting his left hand on his trusty sword.

A short martial symphony passed almost unheeded, when the strange looking figure in official cap and yellow gown came before the King, and in a clear, sonorous voice, commenced the following speech:—

"Gentlemen. This concourse of the Representatives of so many illustrious cities, of so many distinguished Institutions at the feet of the statue which to-day we inaugurate, and the august presence of the King of Italy in this solemn assembly, have a grand, a sublime signification.

"From Allighieri Italy had her language, the first element of unity; from him she had also the idea of nationality which for five centuries has been working within her, until the obstacles to its accomplishment having been overcome under our own eyes, and by the work of a Magnanimous King, the idea has become transformed into a fact. If, therefore, the memory and the teachings of that great man, jealously guarded in the souls of the Italians, during the long continued oppression, were the germs whence the events had their origin of which we have been the witnesses and the actors, it was right—that liberated Italy should celebrate with singular honours the first secular anniversary of his birth.

"It is not, therefore, only to the most exalted Poet, the illustrious Philosopher, and the great Citizen, that we this day render due and merited homage. No, Gentlemen, all of us here assembled and come together from the most distant parts of Italy, all of us, from the August Monarch

* Athenæum, May 27, 1865.

down to the representative of the most humble Free-Town, have hastened to affirm again, in the face of the whole world, the glorious resurrection of the Italian Nation, our indissoluble unity, and our independence. And we affirm it in the most noble manner, revealing to the astonished nations the original author of the work; not yet completed, but henceforth assured by our regeneration.

"Let Italy, therefore, and Europe, and the whole civilized world recognize and know that the festival which the city of the Poet's birth this day celebrates, and this act which is by us accomplished, are none other than the solemn confirmation of the compact which unites together the scattered members of the ancient mother of modern civilization. And since the duty of my office calls me, however undeservedly, to be the first to raise a voice in the midst of you during the brief moments of such a solemnity, may the King's most excellent Majesty deign to receive from my lips the expression of the homage of fidelity of this city, which aspires to nothing else than to dedicate itself to the fulfilment of the destinies of Italy: and may the populations of the Kingdom accept our fraternal salutation who, one and all of us, pant only to sacrifice ourselves to the glory and prosperity of our common country."

The speech ended, the King shook hands with the Gonfaloniere, and said a few words himself, there was a grand flourish from the orchestra, the veil of the monument parted at the top then lay in folds on the ground, and the majestic figure of Dante stood revealed before us — in marble, looking, as in life, the man — then off went all hats, and there arose a shout —

"Onorate l'altissimo Poeta!"

such as fair Florence had not heard before, and never will again, that rent the air, it was so loud and long: the slumberers in Santa Croce's Aisles might well have been disturbed, and dreamt the world had taken its last turn. Music crashed, voices rang, and the bells of the Palazzo Vecchio saluted; a rocket sent up from a neighbouring tower gave the signal to distant watchers, and tidings of the felicitous event were dispatched in all directions.

Well might the heavens smile propitious, and the sun of Italy shine out in all his glory. Well might the Nation rejoice, and the *Spiriti Magni* exult in jubilee; and well might the mortal spoils of the Poet, as though the Prophet had cried unto them —

"O ye dry bones hear the word of the Lord",

seek to burst the dark limits of their hiding place, and come forth once more to the light of day, a witness before all men that Dante's triumph in the unity of his country had been written there —

“nel magno volume
U' non si muta mai bianco nè bruno.”

CHAPTER VI.

Dante the Poet prophet — the Pilot to the Heavenly Shore. Description of his Statue. Address of the Prof. Giuliani. Reply of the King to some remarks of the Professor.

It has been well and correctly said that — “Dante had in his nature and character so much of the *Vates* — the prophet poet — that he anticipated the future of his country, and influenced her destinies through every subsequent age.”* But how did he do this? How did he who “lived and breathed in an atmosphere far above his contemporaries, and belonged not to one age, but to all time”,† how did he effect this? By seeking to infuse his own spirit and principles into the hearts and minds of all his countrymen, interweaving these in the very texture of the language and rising literature of Italy, and there laying the sure foundation of her future prosperity. Literature and patriotism thus planted and growing up together, along with the then reviving arts and sciences, and all that tends to civilize and adorn society, could not fail to bring forth their fruits in due season. Thus would the time come when Italy would be prepared to vindicate her independence and regain her nationality, and when thus prepared, the providence of God,

“che con Scipio
Difese a Roma la gloria del Mondo”,
would not fail to send a leader to direct her course.

Dante was not insensible to the importance of *his* mission, the greatness of the object almost made him shrink back from undertaking it, doubting his own capacity —

“Io non Enèa, io non Paolo sono”.

The regeneration and restoration of Italy by means of a *sacred poem* was, indeed, analogous to the operation of

* London Quarterly Review, October 1865.

† Ibid.

the written Word itself — “turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the *just*”. Nor could human agency have had a more noble office assigned to it. His qualifications for this work were, in point of fact, complete. To an intense love of the good, the beautiful, and the true, he added an innate horror of vice in every form. Truth and fearlessness in him were united.

“Sotto l’osbergo del sentirsi pura”,

the Poet continued his prescribed career, never doubting but that posterity would appreciate his design, and reward his labours with an undying crown. Dante knew so much that he was enabled to perceive more. Things beyond the vision of ordinary men, he, from the summit of his lofty intellect, replete with wisdom, and with a vast experience of men and things, was privileged to see and understand. He left no subject of human science unstudied, no phenomena of nature unobserved. To these comprehensive acquisitions he added profound reflection, hence he made discoveries, and arrived at convictions clear and satisfactory. Referring all things to their eternal source, and turning his thoughtful mind towards that mirror —

“Ov’ ogni cosa dipinta si vede”,

he obtained the conscious certainty, that in the Divine order, which knows no variability, the consummation foreseen was sure and fixed.

No one is so competent to speak of facts as he who has fully felt their force. Dante to whom the court, the senate, and the camp were alike familiar, who had conversed with men no less than with books, could distinguish, within the circle of his mental vision, the nascent germs of events which, in part, were but the continuation and consequences of the present.

Were it possible to calculate the occurrence of moral and political phenomena, with the same precision as astronomical ones, from a knowledge of all the elements concerned in their production, predictions might be made with as much certainty in the former as in the latter. For all phenomena, whether moral, political, spiritual, or physical, are, as parts of an established *order* of things, under formal and settled laws; and are developed on fixed principles, which are the manifestations of the Divine Government in the course of nature, and in our human economy. But from the peculiar character of the induction required, and the difficulty, not to say impossibility of arriving at a complete knowledge of all the concurrent causes, a certain approximation only to the result of their

combination and mutual effects, is all that can be hoped for; and he who is best acquainted with these, with the motives of action, with the minds acted upon, and the influence of modifying agents, will be the most likely to predict a truthful result.

Dante, from his knowledge of the past and of the present, of men and things, of the Italian character, and Italian requirements; from his profound meditation on cause and effect, and his perfect confidence in universal order, as the impress of Deity on the works of creation, was eminently qualified to anticipate results of which others, less gifted and less capable, could form no idea; and announcements which, proceeding from him, were the result of a well-formed induction, might to some, who knew nothing of these things, and were consequently incapable of reasoning about them, appear as superhuman predictions. He believed in the conclusions to which he came because he knew that human nature never changes, and he had arrived at his results by persevering mental analysis and synthesis as applicable to the prediction of a great political event as mathematical calculations are to that of the return of a comet.

History relates the past, meditation, thus conducted, reveals the future. But the knowledge thus obtained is confined to general facts, particulars pertain only to the Omniscient. When, therefore, Dante foretold that the time would come when Italy would again enjoy good government, unity, and peace, it was because he had estimated human nature so well, had felt intensely the requirements of his country, knew thoroughly the temper of his countrymen, saw the course preparing, and had himself laid down with certainty the chart. He did, however, more than this, he not only pointed the way, but he gave also the support for the voyage.

The political cycles of nations are but as drops of water in the ocean; they make up mere infinitesimal portions of the time through which we are passing: behind us lies a distance incalculable, before us extends an infinite to come; Dante rests not midway; he steers the bark of his genius for that port — "*Ov' ogni ben si termina e s' inizia.*"

The statue of the Poet produced a vivid and profound impression, and was felt to be truly Dantesche. In height it is nearly 18 feet 8 inches, and stands on a pedestal at least a foot higher, nearly 19 feet 8 inches. From this elevation the laurel-crowned Poet looks down with an

expression of anger and sorrow at the sufferings of his beloved country; his left foot is advanced, and the body rests chiefly on the right; with his left hand he grasps his robe, gathering it up in front, and drawing it closely to his person with an energy indicative of deep mental emotion. In his right hand, at his side, he holds the sacred poem, in which, with love, is written —

“Cìò che per l'universo si squaderna.”

He appears in the act of uttering that bitter, but effective reproof —

“Ahi! serva Italia di dolore ostello”;

words which more than any other have awakened, as well they might, the Italians to a sense of their national self-duty. The Imperial bird,

Che fe' i Romani al mondo reverendi,
symbolical of Dante's principles, and of his lofty eloquence, shares a portion of the pedestal, and looks up wistfully in the Poet's face.

The Pedestal itself, the design of Luigi del Sarto, Architect, as a work of art deserves a special notice.* It is in three architectural divisions, ornamented with subjects from the Divina Commedia, and guarded by four lions supporting shields, on which, within wreaths, are the titles of Dante's four principal minor works; the *Vita Nuova* has a wreath of laurel; the *Convito*, one of olive; the *Monarchia*, one of oak; and the *Vulgare Eloquio*, one

* It is quadrangular, with the angles splayed. The central, as well as the upper portion, has a cornice with acanthus leaves; at the angles of the former are pilasters, and between these are bassi relievi (at present only in fresco) representing Dante opposed by the tre fiere: Dante at the foot of the Purgatorial Mount; Dante entering the constellation Gemini; and Dante conversing with the shade of Manfred. The lower division of the pedestal consists of a double stylobate projecting at the angles, on the upper of which are seated the four lions, and on the frieze are the arms of the principal cities in Italy, to show that their union was foreknown to Dante (*Guida*). There are five on each face, and three on each projection. The Wolf of Rome occupies the centre of the west side, or the post of honour, as the capital of Italy. The other centres, passing on the right hand of the Monument, are occupied by Turin, Naples, and Milan. Florence is content to occupy a front place on the first buttress between Siena and Lucca. Beginning with Rome, the order is — Ravenna, Perugia, Siena, Florence, Lucca, Pisa, Livorno, Turin, Alessandria, Savona, Guastalla, Genova, Alcamo, Sassari, Naples, Brindisi, Trapani, Catanzaro, Catania, Palermo, Cremona, Trent, Brescia, Milan, Istria, Roveredo, Padova, Venezia, Verona, Bologna, and Ancona. All these Municipalities contributed to the erection of the Monument. The lower stylobate is plain, and rests on three steps.

of various flowers. The upper division of the pedestal bears the simple inscription:

A Dante Alighieri

L'Italia

MDCCLXV.

To say that the statue gave satisfaction, would be to say very little; it caused a thrilling effect, as well it might. The talented and modest Sculptor, Enrico Pazzi of Ravenna, who, it appears, was not present to participate personally in the applause his work produced, was, by the spontaneous act of the King, created a Cavalier. But no honour can equal that which he has created for himself. And now when the excitement of this supreme moment had somewhat subsided, and the formal act, by which the Commission for erecting the monument made it over to the Municipality, had been read by the notary, previously to its being signed by the chairman of the Commission and the Gonfaloniere as principals, and by the King and others present as witnesses, the slim figure of the Padre Giuliani, with flushed cheek and beaming eye, like one inspired, advanced to the front and delivered an animated oration, eloquently touching on the salient points of the Poet's life, and of the event which we were here assembled to celebrate. It began as follows —

"Italians! "Onorate l'altissimo Poeta": His great soul is appeased. Vanquished the furious rage which closed to Dante the gates of his beloved city; vanquished the envy which maliciously plucked the laurel from his sacred head; vanquished the long vengeance of other nations, Italy, returned to the consciousness of herself, consecrates to him this admirable Monument, a witness to the world of the divinity of Genius and Virtue sublimated by misfortune. It was among the decrees of Providence that the triumph of Dante should be verified in the hour of the confirmed renovation of Italy. Italy, a servant, and divided against herself, could not worthily celebrate the festival of the Poet who desired to see her united and free.

"Informal and discordant languages disfigured her; he raised the native idiom to insuperable grandeur; and, with the dominating power of art and divine melody, fixed it as a bond of fraternity on all the populations of the "bel Paese". In conformity to the perfect idea of the Beautiful, he exemplified a whole literature in a single poem, and infused into it the spirit of the Nation which now therein regards itself reflected and entire.

"Civilization draws new life from Religion. As the uniting force and consolation of human souls, Dante recommended it incessantly, and desired that the Priesthood should abstain from meddling in mundane affairs, by which so easily the guiding star through heavenly paths is missed, and lost to sight. To tame the rage of factions, and to subdue the power of tyrants, Dante conceived the idea of a Monarchy that might more effectually bind the people to each other, might unite Cæsar to Rome, Rome to Italy, and Italy to the World, and recall all men under the public and most sacred ensign of Justice.

"And now behold how readily and eagerly the Italians hasten from all parts to this national solemnity, like long separated families coming together with joy to celebrate the natal day of their ancient father, and to strengthen themselves in the communion of a generous affection conformably to the condition of their new life. May adverse discord never more attempt to break so holy a tie, nor to undo the prodigious transformation of so many hearts into one! At the sad spectacle of liberty profaned, this image of the magnanimous Poet who sang the praises of Farinata, of Cato, and of Sordello, would hide itself beneath an impenetrable veil.

"True it is, the masterly hand of the Artist has set before us the figure of Dante in the act of upbraiding us for our long suffered civic discords and divisions. Since unhappy Italy first felt her vital unity pulsate in the accumulated indignation of her Poet, it behoves her in future to remember her long bewailed losses, that such errors of the past may never occur again. Nor could the austere semblance of Allighieri put off its severity and clothe itself in a smile of entire satisfaction, while Rome still weeps, and Venice, beneath the indignant yoke of a foreign oppressor, in pain and suffering, beats her troubled breast.

"Up then, ye young men, with hope forerunning to the triumphant victory; scatter flowers in congratulation before the dear paternal Image! And ye, generous women, your garlands weave to welcome and make glad the Poet who, undivided from his Beatrice, presented her as a bright example of female perfection, and from her drew capacity to divine the beauties and harmonies of Paradise. O fortunate heroes of Palestro, of San Martino, and of Calatafimi! hang up your swords about the monument of the Warrior, to whom the field of glory alone was wanting, but not the spirit to bear off the palm."

Allusion was made to the banners, figuratively stained with blood sacrificed for the independence of the Nation, and now lowered in emulous zeal to the flag of Italy bearing the cross, the symbol of national redemption. The Orator then exclaimed — "Hymns of thanksgiving ascend to the Saint of Saints who cheers us with the blessed light of this, for centuries, long wished for day." Florence came in for a share of praise; and the presence of foreign nations was turned to the glory of the Poet of Christianity, whose light penetrated all European dwellings and shone from world to world. Rising in poetic fervor, Giuliani conceived the statue of Dante to descend from its pedestal, and that the sound of his beloved voice had the same effect on Macchiavelli and his associates in Santa Croce, as that of Virgil had on the shades of Homer, Horace, Ovid, and Lucan —

Intanto voce fu per me udità:

Onorate l'altissimo Poeta:

L'ombra sua torna, ch'era dipartita.

In conclusion he said: "Italians! In the unity of minds is consolidated the unity of our Nation risen to freedom of life. Let us draw together in a new bond of love around the great Father Allighieri; let this be his splendid and inviolable crown, this his glorious triumph.

"Divine is the shout which rises from the heart to transmit itself from generation to generation as the heritage of an affection mighty in enterprizes of rectitude and glory.

Onorate l'altissimo Poeta."

And honoured he was as no Italian had ever been before. The King congratulated the eloquent Professor on his love for Italy and Dante. To which he replied with emotion, that his affection for Italy filled him with gratitude and admiration for all that his Majesty had done for the national cause. The King said: "*I have done what I could, and am ready to do what remains to be done.*" The Professor exclaimed — "Majesty! may God bless your sword." To which the King immediately replied — "*I have pledged it in the cause of Italy and Justice.*" Memorable words that made a deep impression on all who heard them, and were subsequently confirmed. The King of Italy showed also that he had studied Dante to some purpose, and, in few words, pronounced the best commentary that was spoken on the occasion, for as he gazed around on the goodly array, he said to the Gonfaloniere who stood

near to him — 'had it been possible to have brought together a similar assemblage of Italian representatives in the days of Dante, the Piazza of Santa Croce would in a few minutes have become a bloody battle-field; this shows the force of an idea'.

But where is he, who more than any other carried out the purpose of the Prophet-poet? Where is he whose god-like voice and whose mighty arm joined together this long severed land, and made it *one*? Aye! Where is he who first proclaimed the King of Italy?

There is a small island in the Tuscan sea, the winds of heaven sweep over it freely, and the waves that dance around it, rejoicing in their liberty, leap up and kiss its rocky shore; it is far away from human habitations and the busy haunts of men, but a glory rests upon it, and a sacredness is there which they who approach it feel: the ships, as they pass to and fro from Bastia to Livorn', haul down, in reverence, their flags, and all eyes are directed towards it as a spot rendered holy beyond every other. It is the home of the *Liberator*, Giuseppe Garibaldi, he who joined Sicily and Naples to Italy. Like Cincinnatus, and the noble Washington, he is occupied about his little farm, his thoughts alone reach the scene of this day's ceremony, he will not divide its honours with the King, nor will he diminish the devotion due to Dante. But our hearts yearn towards him, and many a gentle sigh at his self-denying absence is wafted, in spirit, to his island-home.

And now a volume of harmonious sounds, vocal and instrumental, bursts forth and fills the air — it is the hymn in honour of the Poet, written by Corsini, and set to music by Romani — while it is singing, the busy Notary of the Comune registers the solemn act, and the King and others sign as witnesses. The chorus swells, the flood-gates of harmony are thrown open wide, and the torrent of melody rushes on like a mighty river, the stringed instruments rise to an overwhelming climax, then, as the closing cadence ebbs and flows, *vivas* are mingled with the falling notes, and universal acclamations close the scene. It is finished; and the vast concourse begins to disperse. In the cloister of Santa Croce, the Gonfaloniere receives the banners presented by the deputations — friends seek out friends — there is embracing, and kissing, and shaking of hands, and long interrupted relations are renewed beneath the auspicious influence of Dante Allighieri.

But the festivities were not over, popular recreations were to follow in the afternoon, and in the mean time, happy was he who in place of a precarious scramble at a public table, had a good friend to ask him to dinner. Between five and six there was a regatta on the Arno; at the same time an historical cavalcade of the Equestrian company Guillaume took place to the meadow in the Cascine called *del Quercione*, where a tournament was performed, in character, to commemorate the peace concluded between the Guelphs and Ghibelins in 1304. Various gymnastic feats followed, and the youthful Ethardo made his spiral ascent on the rolling ball. There was also a Tombola on the Piazza dell' Indipendenza. At the same time in the afternoon the Mayor of Fiesole proceeded to the villa Giuntini at Camerata, to inaugurate an inscription in honour of Dante, to whom this property belonged — the cortile, which is the oldest part now remaining, had been decorated by the present proprietor, the Cav. Giuntini, with marble portraits, by Dupré, of the Poet and Beatrice Portinari. At night Florence was brilliantly illuminated, and bands of music were stationed in various places. To close the public doings of this eventful day, after ten there was a choral performance by amateur singers, with instrumental music, in honour of Dante in the Piazza Santa Croce.

Among the local demonstrations which took place in various parts of Italy on this occasion, the inauguration of a monument at Treviso,

“—dove Sile e Cagnan s'accompagna”,

deserves to be mentioned. Mantua, Venice, Padua, Verona, and other cities still held by the Austrians, contrived to gratify their national feelings by appointing representatives, sending congratulatory addresses to Florence, and getting up, in a comparatively private way, literary and other commemorations at home. Rome also celebrated it as best she could. The Comitato nazionale Romano was represented at the Festival by the Conte Giuseppe Angelo Manni; and several productions appeared from the pens of well-known writers.* The Church had taken no part in this national festival, and the priests, in general, looked upon it with envious eyes; but there was one at Rome

* See *La Nazione*, Domenica 14 Maggio. On which day the *Nazione*, to be in harmony with the occasion, increased its size, and came out with *six* permanent columns on the page instead of five, its former number.

whose versatile heart still beat with silent admiration, though he kept the secret to himself — that priest was the Pontiff.*

CHAPTER VII.

Programme of the second day of the Dante Festival. The *Casa di Dante*, description and details of that which is now so called. Authorities on the subject — Boccaccio, Leonardo Bruni, Filelfo, Pelli, Fraticelli, etc.

The Festivities appointed for the 15th of May, the second day of the Dante Festival, were a Literary Academy with music at 11 o'clock in the hall of the Philharmonic Society, Via del Palagio. The programme included a hymn to Beatrice, and the return of Dante to Florence. At twelve, or soon after, a meeting of the *Ateneo Italiano* was to follow in the *Sala del Buonomore*, in the Via Ricarsoli. At 2 p. m. there were to be Horse races in the grand Prato of the Cascine; and at eight, a grand musical Academy was to be held in honour of Dante in the Theatre Pagliano.

But there was one great attraction to which the *Guida* did not draw particular attention — Dante had an "At home". There was a grand popular reception in the Piazza di San Martino — though the Poet himself was invisible, save to the mind's eye only. It is true, a constant stream of carriages did not keep setting down and taking up all day long, but crowds of people were pouring up and down the Poet's stairs from morning till night.

The house indicated the festive occasion; there was a row of painted shields in front, including the early and later arms of the family, and festoons of green foliage were suspended from the windows, or rather their openings, for sashes there were none. All the rooms and floors were thrown freely open, and though there was no furniture, not even a stool to sit upon, yet no one felt weary, and everybody came and went just as he or she liked. It was also on the way to the Dantesche Exhibition, and no Danto-

* What emotions of love and jealousy passed through the still sensitive heart of Pio Nono on the occasion of the Dante Festival, has since been shown in the desire of the Pope to eclipse, if possible, the Italian demonstration, by a Catholic festival in honour of St. Peter in 1867, thus giving the Church an opportunity of recovering its reputation for magnificent shows.

philist could go there without having first called at the Poet's house.

But what do we see? The family of the Allighieri had long lived in Florence, and was among the most honorable there; it was not a wealthy family, but one well to do in the world, it had possessions in the campagna, there was the Villa di Camerata in Fiesole, a property at Pagnolle, and another at Piagentina, and the father of Dante was a member of the highest and best paid profession in Florence, he was a lawyer and a judge, and after his death, Dante being a child, his mother placed him with the most learned and distinguished master in Florence, the Notary of the Republic, to be instructed in philosophy, and brought up to fill the highest offices of the state, according to his rank in life, his talents and acquirements. Dante became the bosom friend of Carlo Martello, was the gayest of the gay, the centre of an admiring circle, and the very glass of fashion in the best society of Florence. Yet the authors of the official notice of Dante's house, drawn up by order of the Comune, and published on the occasion of the Festival, would have us believe that the whole of it was comprised in that narrow strip of building, of some sixteen feet frontage, and about forty-five feet deep, of three stories high, with a magazine below, an attic above, six small windows in front, and none behind, which faces the side of the Torre della Castagna. They think that this "*ristretto abituro*" might not be inappropriate to him who praised and followed the modest virtues of his ancestors". Wedged up between other somewhat similar houses of rather more ample dimensions, and of a more modern character, this fraction of a building tells its own tale, that it is but a fragment of a once larger edifice, "a bit of quality tumbled into decay", which, in recent times, has been accommodated to still more fallen fortunes, and made into a residence for three different families in very indifferent circumstances, where nothing, except the door below, has any pretensions to be even of the time of Dante.

The houses of the Allighieri were destroyed by a democratic mob in 1302, led on by Dante's political enemies. Years after his death, when the property had been much subdivided, and his sons, in part, restored to their rights in Florence, these houses were built up again, after a fashion, and of this re-edification the old doorway, demolished about five and twenty years ago, with the arch that rested against it, were the only remains. A design

by Vasari, giving an idea of the appearance of these houses in his time, is said to exist at Pisa.*

Now let us enter — a narrow straight flight of twenty steps, with a landing half-way of double the breadth of a tread, leads from the pavement to the first floor of the house. But as the third floor is the principal one, we will begin with that. The depth through is about forty-five feet, and the width about fifteen, or perhaps a little more.† Let the reader just suppose this depth to be divided into three nearly equal portions. In the first division is a narrow living room with a window facing the street; at the side of it, and of nearly equal width, is the kitchen, also with a window; here, against the party-wall, is a mediæval fire-place, the only one on the flat; towards the window is the sink, opposite to which is an open well, and on the other side of the fire-place is a wood closet. In the second division come the stairs, and a room about five paces, or eleven feet three inches square, it has no other light than what is obtained from an aperture in the wall supporting the stairs, over which is a small modern skylight. The third division consists of a single room, without any window; at the extremity are two doorways, the one on the left leads into a closet, and through it on to a small terrace, the one on the right opens on to this terrace, in the corner of which is the *retrait*. Were it not for this opening, and the terrace, the principal room of the *piano nobile* would be as dark as the best room on the flats below. So that this floor has four rooms including the kitchen with its conveniences; the height is about thirteen feet, and the walls have been coloured, with borders in fresco, now much dilapidated. The second story consists of nearly two equal portions. The front half is divided into a long and narrow living room, some twenty-two feet by seven, which has a window looking into the street; at the side is the kitchen with its wide fire-place, a window, the well shut in with a door, the wood-cellar and sink; also the staircase with

* See *Il Giornale Illustrato*, dal 3 al 9 Giugno 1865. "Ora di questa seconda costruzione non resta che la porticina sovraccennata e un arco non si sa come addossato alla stessa. Case veramente non sono, ma sono ruine e reliquie della culla di Dante". Ibid. The present doorway is an accommodation of another one set up from a drawing of the former made by Mr. Seymour Kirkup, and erected under his direction.

† There were so many people in the rooms that the Author could only pace them through in a hurried manner.

its landing. The back half consists of a single room some twenty feet long by fourteen wide, very obscure, with a closet at the end on one side, and a *retrait* on the other, it is about twelve feet high. So that this floor has only two rooms besides a kitchen. The floor below corresponds to it, but the windows in front are rather wider. Over the third floor, at the back, is a single room with a closet and convenience. And this is the house assigned to the once chief Prior of the Republic! True, the *Torre della Castagna*, in which the six *priori dell' arti* elected August 15th 1282, *stettono rinchiusi* for two months, that is, remained shut up for safety during their term of office (see *Dino Compagni*, lib. 1.), shows that high officials were content with a humble residence, and if the tall narrow old tower could accommodate six, why the house at the side which it overshadowed might surely satisfy one, but then the tower was a make-shift for a very short time, whereas the house was a family mansion in perpetuity with all its requirements.

Cacciaguida says to Dante —

Gli antichi miei ed io nacqui nel loco
Dove si truova pria l'ultimo sesto
Da quel che corre il vostro annual gioco.

And Leonardo Bruni (1369—1444) who had well informed himself of all that was then to be known about the houses of Dante, tells us — “Messer Cacciaguida, e i fratelli, e i loro antichi abitarono quasi in sul canto di Porta S. Piero, dove prima vi s'entrava da Mercato Vecchio, nelle case che ancora oggi si chiamano degli Elisei, perchè a loro rimase l'eredità. Quelli di Messer Cacciaguida, detti Aldighieri, abitarono in su la piazza dietro a S. Martino del Vescovo, dirimpetto alla via che va a casa i Sacchetti, e dall' altra parte si stendono verso le case de' Donati, e de' Giuochi.” The houses of the Allighieri, which occupied a considerable frontage, abutted behind on the Curia de' Donati, and were bounded on the west by the Casa del Bello. Fuller particulars of their boundaries are furnished by a document in the Collection of Archives from 1266—69, in reference to certain injuries received from the Ghibelins. “*De populo S. Martini (De Sextu Portae S. Petri). Unam domum aliquantulum destructam Gerii olim domini Belli Alaghieri dicto tempore in dicto populo, cui 1° via, 2° filiorum Donati, 3° filiorum Mardoli,* 4° Bellincionis*

* The Case de' Mardoli faced towards Santa Margherita.

*Allighieri, damnum cuius extimaverunt libras vigintiquinque.** From which we may infer that the houses of the Allighieri occupied the rest of the frontage of this block, well shown on Lord Vernon's plan, as far as the Via di Santa Margherita, which led from the Via Ricciarda to the Corso, passing the little church of the Santa, and coming out nearly opposite to the Case de' Portinari. The church was one of the thirty-six parochial churches of the first circle of the city. The injury done to the house of Geri del Bello, to judge by the amount of damages allowed, would seem to have been slight, though in those days twenty-five lire would sometimes purchase an entire dwelling.†

Boccaccio, Dante's earliest biographer, if we except Giovanni Villani, says of the Poet — "ricevuto nella paterna casa da assai lieta fortuna, lieta, dico, secondo la qualità del mondo che allora s'usava". And Leonardo says — "Dante innanzi la cacciata sua di Firenze, tutto ch'è di grandissima ricchezza non fusse, nientedimeno non fu povero, ma ebbe patrimonio mediocre, e sufficiente al vivere onoratamente." — "Case in Firenze ebbe assai decenti, congiunte con le case di Geri di Messer

* "*Della Casa di Dante*", p. 9. The authors of this work appear to have mistaken the house of *Geri del Bello*, for the house of the Poet's father, this however we may forgive them, but not for confounding the two persons together, and making Dante the son of this *Geri* and the grandson of *Bello*, instead of the son of *Allighieri*, and grandson of *Bellincione*. See their "*Genealogia della Famiglia Alighieri*", p. 57, and compare it with that given by Pelli, p. 28, and confirmed by Fraticelli and others. Pelli says, p. 32: "*D'Allighieri* (the bisavo of Dante) nacque *Bellincione*, e messer Bello. Il primo fu l'avo di Dante, quantunque da altri sia stato creduto diversamente (see Pelli's note to this) e si trova nominato nelle vecchie carte fino nell' anno 1266. Da lui discese *Allighieri* padre del Poeta, *Brunetto*, che ebbe un figliuolo detto *Cione*, e *Gherardo*, il quale viveva nel 1277. Da messer *Bello* che fioriva nel 1255, furono generati parimente più figliuoli, cioè *Gualfreduccio* ascritto nel 1287, all' arte del cambio, messer *Cione*, *Cenni*, e *Geri*. E quest' ultimo senza fallo quello, di cui parla il nostro Dante nel XXIX Canto dell' Inferno (v. 19—36) etc." See also Fraticelli "*Vita di Dante Alighieri*", p. 14. "Da lui (*Bello*) discesero *Cenni*, *Gualfreduccio*, *Cione* e quel *Geri*, detto appunto del *Bello*, etc. etc." according to the authors of the "*Casa di Dante*", *Brunetto*, *Cione*, *Gherardo*, *Gualfreduccio*, and "*Alighieri* sincopa *Geri*" (sic) were all sons of *Bello*; and *Francesco* and *Dante* were the sons of this *Geri* whom the Poet put in Hell(!).

† "Con questo prezzo nel 1300 con rogito di un Ser Nello Giordani, fu comprata in Firenze una casa nel popolo di San Michele Visdomini da un tal Maso di Badalone del Castello di Cozzile di Valdinievole." *Casa di Dante*, p. 32.

Bello suo consorte: possessioni in Camerata, e nella Piagentina, e in Piano di Ripoli: suppellettile abbondante e preziosa, secondo lui scrive".* Leonardo relates, at the close of this notice, that a grandson of Peter, the eldest son of Dante, coming to Florence, with other young men of Verona, where his family had settled, and was in high esteem, called upon him as the friend of the Poet's memory, when, as he says — "io gli mostrai le case di Dante, e dei suoi antichi; e diegli notizia di molte cose a lui incognite, per essersi stranato lui e i suoi della patria."

Mario Filelfo, in his life of Dante written about 1468, confirms what Leonardo had already stated. Having spoken of Dante's ancestors, he says — "At hi, qui post illos *Aliger* dici coeperunt, eas incoluere domos, quae apud plateam sunt Divi Martini, cui *ab Episcopo* est cognomen-tum. Sunt enim eae domus illas contra, quae Sacchetti generis sunt, alia vero fronte et Donatorum et Giuochorum imperant domibus. Ut solent per multitudinem ab uno profecti genere in multas familias separari, alias, aliasque incolere domos, ita post Elysei successionem ab illis est effectum, qui ab *Aligero* nati sunt."

There is documentary evidence that the Allighieri resided in S. Martino al Vescova in 1189,† as they had done since the family became separated from that of the Elisei. But the divisions of their houses, that is the question, and whether what is now called the *Casa di Dante*, occupies the entire site of their more ancient dwellings. Previous writers, on documentary, and other authority, have maintained that it does not, and the Cav. Fraticelli (*Vita di Dante*, p. 49) has well summed up the result — "Che cosa pertanto deducasi", he asks, "da questi autentici documenti e da queste autorevoli testimonianze qui sopra riportate? Si deduce che non una sola, ma parecchie erano le case degli Alighieri, poichè dalla piazzetta di San Martino si estendevano fino alla piazzetta de' Giuochi; ed infatti da alcuni fu detto che sulla piazza de' Giuochi rispondeva la Torre così detta di Dante (la quale potrebb' esser probabilmente quella casa alta, che oggi (1861) appartiene ai signori Campani.) Come potrebbe sostenersi che agli Alighieri non appartenesse altro che quella meschina casupola, sul cui uscio, proprio più di segrete che di palagio, fu posta l'iscrizione: *In questa casa degli Alighieri nacque il divino Poeta?*"

* *Vita di Dante.*

† *Della Casa di Dante*, p. 8.

But the authors of the official report affirm that this *was* all, they are convinced "quella essere stata la vera casa di Dante Alighieri", and their souls rejoice ("ne gode l'animo") in this result of their laborious researches. But they confess that they have quoted those documents chiefly which served their purpose best — "anchochè altri documenti relativi a vari interessi della loro famiglia (l'Alighieri) non ci giovassero per convalidare il nostro assunto (p. 8)." They have thus traced, in their way, the historical descent of that portion under consideration to 1332, when Jacopo di Dante came to Florence to arrange about the division of the restored estates, or what remained of them, between the uncle, Francesco, and his nephews. But during the thirty years previous great changes had taken place; of these we are told nothing, but we are told that when everything was divided into two equal portions, the value of each half was 125 golden florins! (See the document given at p. 43.) Since the days of Dante the value of money had probably somewhat diminished. In 1331 the value of the golden florin was three lire (Gio. Villani, l. x., c. 196), and the whole of the remaining estates in town and country in 1332 were thus valued at 750 lire — well may the authors exclaim of the house "*piccola invero*" if this were all, but the best reply to such an unsatisfactory result is found in the fact that, thirty years before, Dante's property was at least worth ten times as much, for the fine inflicted on the Poet was 8000 lire.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Mostra Dantesca. Artistic Division. Notice of Dante's portraits, and other objects of art. Subjects from the Divina Commedia. Designs. Albums etc. Literary Division. Codici. Historical Documents. Printed Books. Notices of rare editions. Translations—comparison of the French with the English.

From the Dante "At-home" it is but a few steps to the Dante Exhibition in the Palace of the Podestà. A crowd of persons are gathered about the entrance, and carriages are setting down as fast as they can drive up. Some visitors have come furnished with the green ticket, others have not, and showers of francs are falling on the table before which they are required to pass. The Exhibition

is on the first floor of the Palace. The objects are arranged in two Divisions, Artistic and Literary. The former comprises Sculpture, Paintings, Medals, Designs, Engravings, and Photographs, with other objects of art not included under these heads. The latter consists of Codici and Printed Editions of the *Divina Commedia*, of Commentaries, Documents relating to the Life and Times of Dante, and whatever else, either in manuscript or in print, may be illustrative of his works.

First Division.

In the first room Dante's effigy is seen in every material from the finest marble and *pietra-dura* down to the fragile substances of a turkey's and an ostrich's egg, including bronze, ivory, brass, *terra-cotta*, cornelian, glass, wood, silk, oil paint, water colour, sun-tint, sepia, and ink. On a carpet of honour, in the centre of the room, is a portrait of the Poet in *pietre-dure* which receives the salutations of the company; after presentation we are at liberty to make the acquaintance of his contemporaries.

The best portrait in oil of Dante is a small *tavola*, about eight inches by six, ascribed to Giovanni Bellini, and quite in his manner; the Poet is represented as a youth of some twenty summers, and though the picture has not Dante's historical nose and chin, yet it bears an elegant general resemblance to him. There is another portrait, in a good style, of about the end of the 16th century, exhibited by the Prince Corsini, the head of which has evidently been taken from an earlier work. There are also portraits of Folco Portinari, as a saint, attributed to the school of the Van Eycks, of the Cardinal Niccolò di Prato, of Brunetto Latini, Corso Donati, and of Dante's most intimate friend, Guido Cavalcanti.

Among the many heads are two very delicate ones in ivory of Dante and Beatrice by Giustino Calvi of Chieti. A very astonishing figure in this goodly company is a colossal sitting statue in *brass* of Boniface VIIIth, Dante's direst enemy, giving the benediction; it is the work of one Manno Bolognese, 1301, and is from the Museo Archeologico of Bologna.

Among the numerous paintings of subjects taken from the *Divina Commedia* we may notice the following—

A picture, about 9 feet by 8, of Ugolino and his children in prison, by Prof. *Pietro Benvenuti* of Arezzo, 1822, he died in 1844.

Dante with ten subjects from his poem by *Vogel v. Vogelstein*.

Dante presenting Giotto to Guido da Polenta of Ravenna, by *Giovanni Mochi*.

Dante and his young friends, on the banks of the Arno, amusing themselves with music and singing, by *Michele Tedesco* da Moliterno in the Basilicata.

The "*Bufera*" of *Giuseppe Bezzuoli*, who died in 1855, represents a storm of wind sweeping over a road in which a wounded man lies supported by a friar, and attended by a youth, while two horses are galloping off in affright. Its connexion with the "*bufera infernale*" of Dante seems very distant indeed.

There is a volume of drawings in sepia by *Federico Zuccaro*, from the Florentine Gallery; another with designs by the late Prof. *Francesco Nenci*, exhibited by his widow; a third with drawings in sepia of the Inferno, by *Giovanni Stradano*, exhibited by the Abate Pietro del Furia.

But more interesting and important than these, are copies from the designs of *Luca Signorelli* in the Duomo at Orvieto, belonging to the Collezione Dantesca of the Count Foucher de Carèil, twelve in number. Also seventy-three designs, in pen and ink, of the torments of the Inferno, by *Francesco Scaramuzza* of Parma, exhibited by the artist, and very clever they are, and do him a world of credit for their bold and truly Dantesche character. These are in the fourth room, which is especially appropriated to designs and engravings. In the fifth room are also designs, together with Dante's mask, and the large photograph of the Poet, from the chapel of the palace, by the brothers Alinari of Florence.

The total number of works of Art is 197, of which 39 are portraits of Dante alone, 5 of Dante and Beatrice; of the former 9 are busts, 3 of which are in marble, 2 in bronze, and 2 in terra-cotta; 11 are portraits in oil; 2 are medallions; 1 is a mask; the others are in various materials. There are 19 medals. The portraits and subjects illustrating the life of Dante are 31, those in reference to the Poem of Dante 82; of works illustrating the honours rendered to Dante there 21.

Second Division.

The Codici of the Divina Commedia here collected are 180, including 29 fragments. The Public Libraries of Florence have furnished 108 of these: the rest have been

sent from various cities of the kingdom. The following table will show the proportional contributions.

Magliabechiana and Palatina,			
entire Codici	36,	fragments 6,	total 42.
Laurenziana, entire Codici	29,	fragments 3,	total 32.
Riccardiana, entire Codici	26,	fragments 8,	total 34.
Trivulziana at Milan,			
entire Codici	19,	fragments 4,	total 23.
National Library at Naples,			
entire Codici	4,	fragments 2,	total 6.
Library of the University at Bologna,			
entire Codici	5, — —		total 5.
Public Library at Siena,			
entire Codici	4,	fragment 1,	total 5.
Public Library at Parma,			
entire Codici	4, — —		total 4.
Library Palatina at Modena,			
entire Codici	3,	fragment 1,	total 4.
Library Comunale of Perugia,			
entire Codici	2,	fragment 1,	total 3.
The Brera at Milan,			
entire Codici	2,	fragment 1,	total 3.
Turin, Brescia, Ravenna, Cortona,			
each	2, — —		total 8.
Genova, Rimini, Imola, Poppi, Friuli,			
each	1, — —		total 5.
The Library Landi of			
Piacenza — —	1, — —		total 1.
Pistoia sent 2 fragments, Cagliari	1,		total 3.
Library of the Avv. Michele Cavaleri of Milan			1.
Library of the Cav. Emilio Frullani of Florence			1.
Total 180 Codici.			

The 29 fragmentary Codici are as follows—

With the Inferno	10 Codici.
With the Inferno and Purgatory . . .	5 Codici.
With the Paradise	5 Codici.
With a portion of the Inferno only . .	3 Codici.
With a portion of the Paradise only . .	2 Codici.
With the Purgatory	1 Codice.
With a portion of the Purgatory and Paradise	1 Codice.
With a portion of the Inferno and Paradise	1 Codice.
With a small fragment of the Inferno .	1 Codice.

Total 29 Codici.

Most of the entire Codici contain *postille*, and many have Commentaries accompanying the text. There are

besides these, 14 Codici of separate Commentaries, *eight* on the whole poem, *six* on portions of it. Of the former *four* are by Benvenuto da Imola, *three* by Jacopo della Lana, and *one* by Pietro the son of Dante. There are also *seven* Codici containing complete or partial translations of the poem, of which *six* are in Latin, *three* by Matteo Ronto, Olivetano, *one* by an anonimo, *one* by Joseph Sacchi of Mantua, and *one* (the Inf. and Purg.) by Giov. Miglio of Covo. The other is an early French version of the Inferno.

There are 27 Codici of the Minor Works of Dante.

Of the 180 Codici of the Divina Commedia those with a date amount to 48, of which only *fifteen* are of the 14th century; the remainder are of the 15th. But the *Codice Poggiali* (Batines No. 163), placed at the head of those with a date, has no actual date, its priority being a mistaken supposition, which a more careful consideration, aided by the remarks of Batines, and of Francesco Palermo in his catalogue of the Codici Palatini, would or should have prevented. There is no positive evidence whatever that this Codice is anterior to 1333, or even to 1336, which is the date of the Lanzi Codice. The Codice Trivulziano No. 2 (Batines No. 257) is of 1337.

The Codici without dates are subdivided into those which have miniatures and designs, and those which have not. One of the most interesting for its illustrations by Paolo Jovio, or in his style, is the Codice from the University Library of Turin (Batines No. 316).

A Codice of the Inferno, from the Library Comunale of Perugia (Batines 398) has designs of the Giotto School.

Three Codici contain portraits of Dante; these are the Codici Riccardiani Nos. 1038, 1040, and the Cod. Palatino 320. The portrait in the latter is a neat and elegant drawing in pen and sepia, of the XVth cent., ascribed, by Sig. Cavacaselle, to a follower of Agnolo Gaddi, but this opinion has been fiercely controverted by Gaetano Milanesi. Agnolo Gaddi was living in 1390, but the portrait is evidently not earlier than the XVth century. The portrait which the Florentine critics have lately set up as the most authentic is the coloured one in the Cod. Riccardiano No. 1040, which represents the Poet as a perfect fright. That in the Cod. Ricc. 1038 is in chiaroscuro.*

There are a few illustrations of the Divina Commedia

* See "*Sul più autentico ritratto di Dante*". Giornale del Centenario, No. 42. Compare with "*Del ritratto di Dante Alighieri etc.*", by Gaetano Milanesi. Firenze 1865.

in a sub-class by themselves. The *Raccoglimento* in terza rima, ascribed to Boccaccio; and the *Capitolo di Busone da Gubbio*, XVth cent. A copy of the "*Forma e sito de lo Inferno*" of Antonio Manetti, corrected by Girolamo Benivieni, who is one of the speakers in the dialogue, and thought, by some, to have been its real author. A full-length portrait of Dante, of the XVth cent., from the Codice Laurenziano, No. 174. The MS., in part autographic, of the *Vita di Dante*, by Melchior Missirini. A description of the Cagliari Codice, by Sig. Contini. Autographs of Epitaphs. And lastly, a sketch of Dante studies in America, by Prof. Achille Magni.

Of much more importance than these, is a series of eighteen documents, mostly original, relating to Dante, and to events of his time.

The *first* is a fifteenth century copy of the registration of Dante's name among the company of Physicians and Apothecaries of Florence.* The *second* is from the *Libro di Consulte* of the Comune for 1301, in which are found registered certain opinions delivered by Dante. The *third* is from the *Libro di Condanne*, commonly called *del Chiodo*, in which are registered the two sentences pronounced against the Poet (Dantem Allighierij [sic]), by Cante de' Gabrielli da Gubbio, potestà of Florence, January 27th, and March 10th, 1302.

The *fourth*, bearing date August 12th, 1373, is the provision by which Boccaccio was appointed the first public

* In 1297 Dante's position as a poet was fully established, and being desirous of taking part in the government of the Republic, from which, by the law passed in 1292 under the influence of Giano della Bella, the nobles were excluded, he became a recognized commoner by registration among the Arti, but why he chose this company is doubtful. (See Pelli, p. 90.) On such an occasion we may be sure that Dante would write his name accordingly to the correct orthography of the family, and we might expect that he would be very precise in stating who and what he was. Now this is just what we do find in the document here exhibited; and bearing in mind the statement of Cacciaguida (Parad. XV., 136—9)

Moronto fu mio frate ed Eliseo;

Mia donna venne a me di val di Pado,

E quindi il soprannome tuo si feo;

the coincidence is worthy of notice—the aspirant to political honours thus wrote himself down—

dante daldighieri degli aldighieri poeta fiorëtino.

Not long after this the *d* was softened into *l*, and the *casato* was written *Allighieri* as in the third document. This mode of spelling it has been followed by the Serego Allighieri family since 1549, when Marc' Antonio Serego married Geneva the last surviving descendant, in the seventh generation, in a direct line from the Poet.

reader of the *Divina Commedia* in Florence. The *fifth*, of June 8th, 1495, is the provision of the council of eighty of the Comune of Florence, consenting to the request of "Messer *Dante Alighieri*", great grandson of the Poet, to be restored to the privileges of citizenship, "considerato . . . esser bene usare qualche gratitudine alla posterità di quello Poeta, el quale è di tanto ornamento a questa città."

The *sixth* is a vote of thanks from the Florentine Academy to Pope Leo Xth, for having sanctioned the removal of Dante's remains from Ravenna to Florence; in this anticipation all were disappointed, and none more so than Michael Angelo, who had put in the following especial paragraph—

"Io Michelagnolo schultore il medesimo a Vostra Santità suplico oferendomi al divin Poeta fare la sepultura sua chondeciente e in locho onorevole in questa città."

These documents were from the *R. Archivio Centrale di Stato*. It would have made the series more complete if from the book of entries and expenses, still preserved in the chancery of the Florentine Captains of Or San Michele, a copy had been exhibited of the order made in 1350 to transmit to Dante's daughter, through Boccaccio, the sum of ten golden Florins, and which is as follows—

"A messer Giovanni di Boccaccio (è il famoso autore delle 100 novelle) fiorini dieci d'oro, perchè gli desse a suora *Beatrice*, figliuola che fu di *Dante Alighieri*, monaca nel monastero di San Stefano dell' uliva di Ravenna."

Twenty-nine years had elapsed since the death of Dante, and this was the first indication of a returning kind feeling shown in Florence towards the family of her illustrious exile. The remaining twelve documents are from various sources—

No. 7. The book commonly called of *Montaperti*, containing the names of the captains and soldiers composing the Florentine host, which fell into the hands of the Senesi in the battle fought September 4th, 1260.

No. 8. Ordinances of the Comune of Siena for erecting a church in honour of St. George on the field of *Montaperti* in memory of the victory. (Inf. X., 85—90.)

No. 9. A Pisan memorial of the XIVth cent., in reference to *Pier delle Vigne*, secretary to Frederic II. (Inf. XIII., 58—78.)

- No. 10. A Diploma of *Corradino*, bearing date Siena July 7th, 1268. (Purg. XX., 68.)
- No. 11. Oath taken by the Potestà of Siena to destroy the palace, the tower, and the houses of *Provenzano Salvani*. (Purg. XI., 109—111.)
- No. 12. A document of April 18th, 1286, by which *Marzucco degli Scornigiani*, novice in the order of Minor Friars, restores to Theodora his wife her dowry and personal effects. (Purg. VI., 16—18.)
- No. 13. Original Codice of the *Statuto del Comune e Popolo Pisano*, according to the reform introduced in 1286 by the Count *Ugolino di Donoratico* and *Nino Visconti giudice di Gallura*. (Inf. XXXIII., 65—7. Purg. VIII., 52—4; 67—82.)
- No. 14. Document by which the Archbishop *Ruggeri*, being in Rome at the Papal Court, in 1286, confirms to the Friars of Sta. Catherine of Pisa a donation of certain possessions which had been left to them. (Inf. XXXIII., 14.)
- No. 15. Document in which Pope Niccolò IV rebukes the Pisans for their cruelty to the Count Ugolino and his children, and for having elected *Guido de Montefeltro* as their captain, ordering the Archbishop *Ruggeri* immediately to repair to Rome to justify his conduct; date Holy Thursday 1289.
- No. 16. Notice of payment made by the Comune of Siena to the three executioners of *Capocchio*, burnt to death in 1293. (Inf. XXIX., 136—7.)
- No. 17. Bolla of Boniface VIII, September 26th, 1296, recommending the daughter of *Nino giudice di Gallura* to the protection of the Comune of Volterra for the support of her rights. (Purg. VIII., 70—2.)
- No. 18. Ratification by the Comune of Siena of a treaty of commerce with the Florentines, August 17th, 1311, by which the latter are at liberty to use the port of *Talamone*. (Purg. XIII., 151—4.)

The printed books consist of Editions of the *Divina Commedia*, the collection of which is very complete, only one of celebrity is wanting, the Naples Edition of 1475, by *Francesco del Tuppo*, printed by *Reussinger*, which is so very rare, that since the Magliabechiana copy disappeared from that Library, no other is known to exist in Italy.* There are a few commentaries and volumes of

* It was reproduced by Lord Vernon, in 1858, in his splendid reprint of the first four Editions, from the copy in the Library of the British Museum. It would seem to have been printed in 1475 or 6.

Chiose; Editions of the Minor Works of Dante; Translations of the Poem, and Illustrations of Dante's Works and Life.

There are *five* copies of the Foligno Edition, 1472; *two* of the Mantua Edition, but only *one* of the Jesi, all of the same year, and thus showing their relative rarity, the last is a splendid copy from the Trivulziana. There are *four* copies of the Naples Edition of 1477—a very handsome volume in small folio, well printed in a good, bold Roman letter, with 32 verses on the page: Dibdin considered it preferable to any of the previous editions in its style of printing and getting up; *Mattia Moravo* has the credit of it, but he was too modest to put his name. That of the Editor deserved also to have been recorded, for he exercised a correct judgment, and printed a text in some places preferable to any of those which had preceded it. Thus we have the more correct reading of Inf. V., 102,

che mi fu tolta el mōdo ancor m'offēde.

which is not found in any other edition either ancient or modern, though it occurs in a large proportion of Codici.

The following is a brief summary of the other Editions in this collection. *Vendeliniana*, 1477, *three* copies; *Nidobeatina*, 1488, *three* copies; Edition of Venice, by Maestro Philippo, 1478, *three* copies; *Landino*, Florence, 1481, *six* copies; the copy from the Riccardiana has 21 engravings, the normal number is 19, when more than these occur, the supplementary engravings do not belong to the series, but are additional illustrations of previous cantos. One of the British Museum copies has 20 vignettes, another has 9, and a third has only 1. A copy in the Imperial Library at Paris has, along with the 19 vignettes, 16 pen and ink drawings. The copy in the Soane library in London has the 19 vignettes and 16 sketches of costume. It is only in the first edition that these vignettes occur, they are believed to have been designed by Sandro Botticelli, and engraved by Baccio Baldini. The other editions which followed with Landino's commentary up to the close of the century, with the exception of that which appeared at Brescia, 1487, were printed at Venice, and all of them have their representatives here; the last was the revised edition by *Piero da Figino*, 1497.

With the sixteenth century a new series began, *Aldus*, 1502, taking the lead, of this there are *five* copies, some with the famous anchor at the end, one is on parchment. The most precious is the Trivulzian copy with the postille

of *Sperone Speroni*, copied into it by *Alessandro Tassoni*. Of the rare counterfeit edition of the same year, ascribed to Bartolomeo Trotti of Lyon, one copy. Edition of *Philippo di Giunta*, 1506, five copies. Various other editions follow these up to that of *Aldus*, 1515, of which there are four copies, in one of them is the interesting notice—
 “Printed in the year 1515, and confronted in 1546 with six manuscript texts belonging to *Gavino dal Varchi*, *Luca Martini*, *Alessandro Menchi*, *Camillo Malpigli*, and *Guglielmo Martini*, the best of which were the two belonging to *Luca Martini*, one of which was on parchment, with the date 1329, the other without a date.”

This is the earliest Codice of which any notice has been preserved, and it is greatly to be regretted that nothing more is known of it. Batines thought that if it could be found it might not prove to be different from that in the Riccardiana of 1429, which has by an erroneous inscription been ascribed to 1329.

Up to the time of Aldus, the usual title of Dante's poem was “*La Comedia*” — Aldus in 1502 changed this to “*Le Terze Rime*”, but *Giunta* revived the former title, which, with the exception of “*Dante*”, and “*Opere del Divino poeta Danthe*”, as in Stagnino's edition of 1512, was usually followed, until *divino* was transferred from the Poet to the poem, and “*La Divina Comedia*” appeared in the edition of *Gabriel Giolito*, Venice, 1555,* and in 1569. The title was adopted by the Academicians for their edition of 1595, “*La Divina Commedia etc.*”, since which time it has been almost universally followed.

Prior to the period of the learned Landino, the recognized masters in Dante lore were *Jacopo della Lana*, *Pietro* and *Jacopo di Dante* (to whom there is much reason, it would seem, for ascribing the “*Ottimo Commento*”), *Boccaccio*, *Buti*, *Benvenuto Rambaldi da Imola*, and *Guiniforto delli Bargigi*, all honoured guests at this banquet of Books. Beneath them are their successors — *Vellutello*, *Daniello*, *Volpi*, *Venturi*, commentators growing small by

* This edition, edited by *Dolce*, is the earliest one with the title “*Divina Comedia*” which the author has seen. Batines, however, following the Paduan Editors, states that the earliest is of 1516.

“*La Divina Comedia col commento di Christoforo Landino revisto da Pietro da Figino. Venetia, per Bernardino Stagnino de Monferra, 1516, in 4to. con figure in legno.*”

But Volpi had not seen it, and there is reason to doubt if ever any one else has. The title was not repeated until 1569, in the edition of *Domenico Farri*, a reprint of that by *Giolito*.

degrees and beautifully less, with a few annotators of still more slender pretensions, who fill the space of three centuries from 1481 to 1791. In the latter year a new race of expounders arose, headed by the *Padre Lombardi*, since whose time their name is *legion*. Some of the more distinguished may be pointed out. Here is the rather irascible, but erudite *Biagioli*; here the worthy Canon of Verona, *Monsignore Giovanni Jacopo Dionisi*, to whom we are indebted for the first development of the political sense of the *Divina Commedia*; here are *Marchetti*; *Portirelli*; *Poggiali*; *Romanis*; *Rossetti*; *Costa*; *Viviani*; *Arrivabeni*; *Cesari*; *Fratlicelli*; *Tommaseò*; *Foscolo*; *Brunone Bianchi*; *Giudici*; *Giuliani*; with *Pelli*; *Balbo*; *Troya*; *Parenti*; *Scolari*; *Batines*; *Witte*; *Vernon*; *Blanc*, *Barlow*; and many others, all faithful followers and devout disciples forming

“la bella scuola

Di quel signor dell' altissimo canto,

Che sovra gli altri com' aquila vola”.

The copies of the *Divina Commedia* here brought together are 198, but there are only 158 editions, in four of which Dante appears in company with *Petrarca*, *Ariosto*, and *Tasso*. If to these 198 copies we add three editions of the *Inferno* only, one of the *Inferno* and *Purgatory*, two of *Varianti*, a *Rimario*, and the *Commentary* by *Benvenuto da Imola*, the works in this class will amount to 205. Among recent publications should be noticed the *Codice Cassinese*, 1864, with a special inscription; the edition by *Luciano Scarabelli* of the commentary by *Jacopo della Lana*, printed at Milan by *Giuseppe Civelli*, between November 22, 1864, and April 22, 1865; and the elegant edition of *Pietro Rossi* of *Mondovi* 1865, both with special inscriptions.

Translations. There are 30 Editions of Translations either of the entire poem, or only part of it. Of these, 4 are in Latin; 1 is in the Milanese dialect; 14 are in French, including a fragment from the *Ecole des Chartes*; 7 are in English, including *Longfellow's* American Translation, seventeen cantos of the *Inferno* by *Parsons*, and a fragment from *Ferrara*; 3 are in German; and 1 in Spanish. It will ever be gratifying to remember how our American brethren stood shoulder to shoulder with us English in this famous Dante muster, helping us to show a better face, the British column being very thin and weak compared with that of the French. Our Gallican neighbours here beat us hollow; we have only *four* trans-

lators to meet their *fourteen*, to wit, *Cary* 1814; *O'Donnel* (Inf.) 1822; *Wright* 1840, and *Rossetti* (Inf.) 1865. Yet we can count as many translations as themselves, the number being *seventeen* on each side. It is true, France entered this field two centuries before England, but we have since made up for our early indifference.

In France, *M. Grangier* published a translation of the entire poem in 1596, a second edition of which was printed in the following year and dedicated to Henry IV. The first English version, it would seem, was that of the *Inferno* by *Rogers*, 1782, twenty years after which appeared *Boyd's* translation of the whole (1802). *M. Grangier* was followed by *Moutonnet de Clairfons* (Inf.) 1776; by *M. le Comte de Rivarol* (Inf.) 1785; by *Colbert d'Estouteville* (grandson of the great Colbert) 1796; and then came *Artaud* 1811—13; *Culimard de Lafayette* (Inf.) 1840; *Brisieux* 1841; *Aroux* 1842 (a larger edition in 1857); *Florentino* 1843 (frequently reprinted); *Louis Ratisbonne* 1852—60; *V. de Saint Mauris* 1853; *Mesnard* 1854; *Sébastien Rhéal* 1854; *Lamennais* 1855; *M. de Mongis* 1857; *Ozanam* (Purg.) 1862; *Hippolite Topin* (Par.) 1862. Out of the above list, only *four*, including *M. Grangier*, were absent from the Florentine review. The following English translators were all absent—*Rogers* (Inf.) 1782; *Boyd* 1802; *Howard* (Inf.) 1807; *Carlyle* (Inf.) 1849; *Cayley* 1851—5; *Follock* 1854; *Brooksbank* (Inf.) 1854; *Bruce Whyte* (Inf.) 1859; *Thomas* (Inf. and Purg.) 1859—62; *Wilkie* (Inf.) 1862; *Ramsay* (Mrs.) 1863; *Ford* (Inf.) 1865; *Dayman* (Inf.) 1843, entire poem 1865, the latter, however, was not published till after the festival.

English translators will only consent to move with measured steps, struggling through verse and rhyme as best they can, delighting in stiff, stout leaves, and in binding strong and stately, almost monumental in manner and solemnity; our lively neighbours on the contrary adapt themselves to circumstances, are content with simple, unpretending prose, easy, correct and elegant, they come out on thin, light paper, and in flexible volumes brochés, hence French translations make their way in the world and circulate freely, while English translations remain heavy fixtures at home.

The three German translations are those of *Philalethes*, 1839—49; *Kannegiesser*, 1843; and *Karl Witte*, 1865. The Spanish translation is that of the *Rev. Don Pedro Fernandez de Villegas*, Burgos, 1515, which being the earliest of any, is entitled to take precedence of all.

There are *ten* editions of Commentaries and Chiose. *Twenty-eight* of the Minor Works of Dante, including translations. And *sixty-one* productions illustrative of Dante's Life and Times, and Works, one of which is the first volume of "*Dante e il suo secolo*". In this class are all those publications printed for the occasion at the expense of the Italian Comunes.*

CHAPTER IX.

The Festivities of the 15th May. The Accademia Musicale in the Theatre Pagliano. Festivities of the 16th May. The Accademia *di quadri viventi* in the Pagliano. The *Ritrovo popolare* under the Uffizi. Banquet given on the 17th to the Strangers who had come to Florence to assist at the Festival. The invitation; the President, the Count Terenzio Mamiani, and his eloquent speech. The Dante medal.

The festivities of the 15th went off to the satisfaction of all who assisted at them; even the horse races proved very amusing, but the chief attraction was the Accademia, under the direction of il Maestro Mabellini, in the Theatre Pagliano, in the evening, at which was performed Pacini's Symphony "*a grande orchestra*", written expressly for the occasion, and dedicated to the Municipality of Florence. Pacini is a veteran composer who has given some hundred operas to the Italian stage, though only two have been heard in England, where he is best known by his excellent bravura, "*Il soave e bel Contento*".† The Symphony

* The Minister of Public Instruction, to give the studious an opportunity of profiting by this valuable collection, was graciously pleased to direct that it should be kept open for fifteen days after the Festival, and so it was, much to the advantage of many, and the advancement of Dante studies.

† "The work, which is written in the canonical form, begins with a *Largo Infernale*, in *D* minor, $\frac{3}{4}$ tempo, having for motto, 'Torments without hope.' The second movement, '*Purgatorio*' ('Hope in the midst of suffering'), is an *Allegretto moderato* in the same key and tempo—a mistake, however clever be the movement considered by itself. It passes, without a complete close, into a *Larghetto Angelico*, '*Il Paradiso*', in *F* major, common time. This is introduced by a *cadenza* for the pianoforte, which instrument has henceforth an *obligato* part in the score. The theme is gracious and stately, the working is good and consequent; the close, however, is weakened by a florid orchestral *cadenza*. Last comes the *Allegro Marziale*, 'The return of Dante to Earth and his Triumph', a bright vigorous march in *D* major, in the treatment of which reminiscences of the former movements are, according to the romantic fashion of the time, not unhappily introduced." See the *Athenæum*, May 27. 1865.

was followed by *Il conte Ugolino*, and the *Ave Maria di Dante*, both by Donizzetti. After which came the Cantata by G. Corsini—*Lo Spirito di Dante*, the music by Signor Mabellini. In this, Carlotta Marchisio took a part. The concert ended by *Il vessillo d'Italia*, three popular choruses by Sig. Magazzari. It is devoutly to be wished that more composers would turn Dantophilists, and set to music the poetry of the Divina Commedia, much of which seems to have been written expressly for it. Later took place a grand Ball in the Casino Borghesi. On the third day there was a meeting of the Accademia della Crusca in the morning; in the afternoon, towards six o'clock, a grand re-union was held in the Piazza Santa Croce, of the "Fratellanze Artigiane", and the Florentine Society of Mutual Succour*, with a distribution of funds. Later in the evening there was an *Accademia di quadri viventi* in the Theatre Pagliano, and later still an assembly for the people under the Uffizi, the quadrangle of which had been tastefully decorated for the occasion, and transformed into a ball-room of magnificent dimensions. The only drawback to the pleasures of the Pagliano were the sufferings of the unhappy souls in the pit, "crammed to bursting with guests", and where to see, and still more to hear, has been described as "a cruel service", it certainly was so to those who could not find seats. The *tableaux vivants*, under the direction of the distinguished painter Niccola Sanesi, were admirable, and the declamations, if possible, were still more so. The Programme was as follows—

Sinfonia.

Vita di Dante. 1°. Quadro — *Il Saluto di Beatrice a Dante.* Coro a Beatrice Portinari. Parole di G. Corsini, musica del Maestro Pieraccini.

Inferno.

- 2°. Quadro — *La Lupa.* Declamazione del signor T. Salvini.
- 3°. Quadro — *Francesca da Rimini*, cs. della signora A. Ristori.
- 4°. Quadro — *Farinata*, cs. del sig. E. Rossi.
- 5°. Quadro — *I ladri*, cs. del suddetto.
- 6°. Quadro — *Il Conte Ugolino*, cs. del sig. T. Salvini.

* In other words "The Trades' benefit Societies".

Purgatorio.

- 7°. Quadro — *La Pia*. Declamazione della signora A. Ristori.
 8°. Quadro — *Sordello*, cs. del sig. E. Rossi.
 9°. Quadro — *La Porta del Purgatorio*, cs. del sig. T. Salvini.

Paradiso.

- 10°. Quadro — *Piccarda*, cs. della sig. A. Ristori.
 11°. Quadro — *Cacciaguida*, cs. del signor L. Gattinelli.
 12°. Quadro — *S. Pietro*, cs. del suddetto.
 13°. Quadro — *Apoteosi di Dante*. La Divina Commedia.
 Coro, parole di***, musica del Maestro L. Bettazzi.

This was an entertainment worthy of a King, and the King was present at it. When the curtain rose, a large Gothic picture frame was seen, within which was a smaller curtain covering the *tableau*, as this was raised, the artistically arranged group, illuminated by electric light, was visible in the most distant part of the theatre, and remained for about two minutes, the smaller curtain was then lowered down over it. As each *tableau* from the Divina Commedia was withdrawn, the Actor came forward to recite the passage relating to it. Here Salvini and Rossi were both equally great; the scene of the *ladri*, with the serpents, was acted by the latter in a manner indescribable, and the declamation, by Ristori, of *Franческа da Rimini* was alone worth a journey to Florence to hear and see. When Salvini, in reciting the passage of the Lupa, came to the verse,

“infin che 'l veltro

Verrà, che la farà morir di doglia.”

he paused—looked significantly towards the royal box, and raised his finger—the theatre rang with enthusiastic cheers, but the King made no sign, he wisely thought it was not politic to admit the application, while his special Envoy was openly treating with Rome in a friendly manner. Rossi had been a pupil of Gustavo Modena, and is a most worthy successor to him. Declamations from Dante's dramatic scenes, when well acted, are a great treat; those who had the good fortune to be present on this occasion will never forget the delight they afforded them. When these admirable performances were over, many of the company repaired to the People's Ball under the Uffizi, and with this concluded, most appropriately, the three days of the Dante Sixth Centenary Festival at Florence.

There was, however, still something more to follow, a graceful supplement in the form of a banquet given by a hundred Gentlemen of Florence to the Strangers who had taken part in these festivities. It was not an official entertainment, but one which emanated from private individuals, and was arranged by a Committee in whose names the invitations were sent. Many official persons, however, put down their subscription of forty francs, but as private gentlemen only. The letter of invitation ran thus—

“A nome e per commissione di parecchi Italiani, grati e riverenti agli stranieri illustri che accorsero a celebrare il *Centenario di Dante*, il Comitato sottoscritto invita la Signoria Vostra al Banchetto che avrà luogo Mercoledì, 17 corrente alle 6½ pomeridiane, nel Palazzo Serristori sui Renai.

La Signoria Vostra ci compiacerà, entrando nella sala, di esibire la presente lettera d'invito.

Professore *Aleardo Aleardi*.

Gasparo Barbèra.

Commendatore *S. D'Ancona*.

Professore *Luigi Ferri*.

Conte *D. C. Fenocchietti*.

Consigliere *A. Lorini*.

Conte *Terenzio Mamiani*.

Conte *Alfredo Serristori*.

Ernesto Susanni.

Professore *A. Targioni*.”

At seven o'clock in the grand Sala of the Palace of the Count Alfred Serristori, who had kindly lent it for this purpose, the Count Mamiani took the chair, supported on his right by the Cav. Vogel v. Vogelstein, and on his left by Dr. Barlow. Opposite sat the Gonfaloniere, and the Count Serego Allighieri. About one hundred and twenty-eight sat down to the banquet. There were present, among others, the Prefect, Count Cantelli; the General commanding the Province, General Cucchiari; the late Minister of Public Instruction, Amari; the Secretary to the present Minister, the Commendatore Nicomede Bianchi; the Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, de Blasis; the Generals Bixio and Longo; the Sculptor Enrico Pazzi; Emeliano Giudici; Prof. Villare; the Padre Giuliani, Pulski, the poets Aleardi and Dell' Ongaro; MM. Hippeau, Mezières, and Hildebrand, the deputation from the University of France; M. Foucher de Carèil; Herr Brockhaus, Herr Schanz, and other Germans; Waldemar Malin

from Russia, and M. Lehreuz from Belgium; Mr. Montgomery Stuart, of the Morning Post; Mr. Spence (who invited the company to spend Saturday evening at his Villa Medici), and Judge Dyer from North America. The band of the Royal Carbineers played at intervals during the banquet. With the champagne, which came on early, the toasts began. The Count Mamiani first gave "The King", which was drunk with all the honours. Shortly after this the Count Cambray Digny rose and gave the toast of the evening, "The health of the Foreign Guests". The Count is a ready speaker, and always says the right thing at the right time. On this occasion, having expressed his great satisfaction at seeing so many illustrious strangers present, he gave a brief description of what they had witnessed on the 14th of May, and expressed his firm belief that on returning to their own countries, they would carry back with them the profound conviction that Italian discords had now for ever ceased. "They have seen on the Piazza of Santa Croce our thousand banners, formerly the emblems of civil strife, encircling crown the grand National Standard, on which, as the star of safety, shines the Savoyian Cross. And in that same square, at the feet of the statue of the great citizen of Italy, they beheld deputations from all the Italian provinces gathered around that King to whom the Italian nation owes everything,* and from whom it expects all. Such a spectacle was a cordial proof that the fraternal affection of the Italian peoples among themselves, and their gratitude to the noble house of Savoy, henceforth render secure and unmoveable the new kingdom of Italy. I trust, therefore, that our illustrious guests will be convinced of this fact, and, on recrossing the Alps, will help to diffuse and generalize the persuasion.

Gentlemen, I drink to the health of the illustrious Strangers seated at this banquet."

Great applause followed, and then came a pause; the numerous waiters resumed their functions, and the business of the banquet proceeded. After an interval, Dr. Barlow

* Had the Gonfaloniere said 'to whom the Italian Nation owes so much, and from whom it expects more', his words would have expressed more correctly, in the Author's opinion, the real facts. It must never be forgotten, and never will, that it was through the heroic and almost miraculous achievements of Garibaldi in Sicily and Naples that Italy first became a kingdom. The Royal resolution followed up what Garibaldi had begun, and consolidated his success. Both were necessary to the union of Italy, and nobly both performed their several parts. May that Union be perpetual!

rose to return thanks, which he did in few words. Brevity has been called "the soul of *wit*"; during the process of discussing such exquisite delicacies as were here served up in luxurious profusion, brevity, if not the soul of wit, is, at least, the soul of sociability. Before he began, the Dr. was observed to cast his eyes once or twice between the table-cloth and his dinner napkin, as if looking for something that he had lost, what it was no one knew, but it was suspected by Dall' Ongaro, who sat next to him, to be a small piece of paper on which certain sentences were written—

"*Da sua memoria labili e caduci.*"

The music ceased—the waiters stood as still as stalactites, and all eyes were directed towards the speaker. Having stated the reason of his rising, he observed that Dante Allighieri was a very great master of oratory, but that *il buon Dio* had not conceded to him that influential faculty, so he begged the President and the Italian hosts to take the will for the deed, to receive the best thanks he could offer for the honour which the foreign guests had received, and for the splendid banquet at which they had been so sumptuously entertained—a graceful hospitality which would never be forgotten, and would be as a new bond of brotherly union among all who love and venerate the memory of Dante Allighieri. He then resumed his seat amid clapping of hands. M. Mezières followed in a clever and animated address in French. After this Judge Dyer rose to treat the company to a speech in English, but as it was incomprehensible to the great majority, he asked Mr. Stewart, his neighbour, to turn it into Italian, which he did most successfully, and made a capital speech, introducing "the *Stati Riuniti*" with much applause. Somewhat later in the evening, Dall' Ongaro proposed—"The Commentators of Dante"—a toast which gave rise to universal hilarity, when he explained that, by the *Commentators* of Dante, he meant themselves, and all the representatives of the Italian Provinces which had assembled at Florence to attest their confirmation of Italian unity. And now as the generous wine, which circulated freely, began to manifest its inward effects, and mortal temperaments grew warmer and warmer, and mirth and festivity mounted up with them, and when Pulszky had spoken out bravely for the sympathy of the Hungarians, and Deputy Cini had paid a generous compliment to the French, and various Germans had assured their brother Italians of the *unveränderliche* attachment they felt for them and theirs,

and the hand of time, which never tarries, was hurrying us on to a nocturnal climax, and excitable spirits were starting up in all parts of the room, so that the banquet seemed evidently drawing to its own solution—at this juncture the President, with emotion, rose from his seat.

The Count Mamiani is of a slight, rather short, and slender figure, of delicate lineaments, with a pleasing, intellectual, and kindly expression of countenance; he is courteous and affable in his manners, energetic in character, eloquent in speech, and, if required, can manifest a dignity and authority sufficient to overawe the most unruly. The Count would seem to have been cast by Nature in that generous mould of Poet, Philosopher, and Politician, of which Dante was the culminating example. He has distinguished himself alike in the literature and in the government of his country. He was Prime Minister to Pio Nono in the Pope's reforming days; was Minister of Public Instruction in the kingdom of Italy in 1862; and has since been the representative of Victor Emanuele at the Court of Athens. There could have been no more appropriate president of this Dante Banquet than the Count Terenzio Mamiani. But we had not yet heard his speech: it had wisely been postponed to the last, after which nothing more could follow.

The Count having risen from his chair, advanced a pace, stepped back, and then poured forth a flood of eloquence that electrified us all. The calm, cool, placid President had disappeared, and in his place had come an orator as by Heaven inspired—full of vigour, full of fire, full of eloquence irresistible. It was not only what Mamiani said, but also the way in which he said it, that so affected his hearers, and brought around him a sympathetic circle drawn by involuntary attraction.

Mamiani commenced by expressing on the part of the Italian hosts the joy and vivid satisfaction it had given them to hear, from the mouths of the strangers seated at the banquet, words full of a profound love for Italy and of avowed wishes for the completion of her unity.

It was nothing new to him, he said, that their French guests should speak in that way, the French army having fought for the resurrection of Italy, and at Palestro and San Martino sealed with its blood a bond of eternal friendship. Nor was the sympathy of the English new to him, and he had listened to their short, frank speeches with the highest satisfaction, but not with wonder. The wonder began on hearing several illustrious Germans loudly pro-

claim their wishes to see Italy free from the Alps to the Adriatic. Mamiani thanked the German nation for those generous vows, adding that nothing is so much desired and looked forward to by the peoples of the Peninsula as to be able to grasp with affection the hand of the descendants of Arminius. "Germany ought to perceive what deep reverence we profess for her; she ought to know that there is not a cabinet of any man of letters in Italy where German books will not be found lying open and in heaps. The Italians only ask this, that the Germans who are accustomed to acknowledge and adore God in all things, would adore Him also in the destiny of nations and in their independence." In the mean time, he trusted that on returning to their own homes, they would assure their noble country that in Italy they had seen the light of the aurora which indicated, without fail, a refulgent noon. "Tell your countrymen", he added, "that these old latin races (*vecchie stirpi latine*) begin no longer to merit the just and tremendous reproaches which the sincere and indignant Roman soul of Dante Allighieri, hurled at our heads."

The orator then proceeded to prove that in seeking to procure the ultimate unification of Italy, the foreign visitors would be procuring that which was useful for all, injurious to none. That some among their guests had been touched by the good example given by Italy, was a new proof, he affirmed, of the great benefit which a complete and liberal nationality brings to all.

"Scarcely risen from the sepulchre, we begin already to exhibit to the world a practical pattern from which any people whatever might derive advantage. It was said, and generally believed, that revolutions always require the sad remedy of dictatorships, and that, in order to advance, it is necessary for a long period to cover the image of liberty with a veil. But we, as you perceive, cause unity and law, revolution and liberty, to proceed with equal steps. It used to be the common opinion, that a revolution could not arrive at its termination without class persecution, and terrible reprisals and revenge. But you can discern nothing of all this in Italy. Hatred and persecution of classes do not here exist. Our patricians march, as it were, at the head of our regeneration, and the people follow willingly and independently. In Italy there are neither conquerors nor conquered; and the enemies of our new institutions find more security beneath the shadow of the *Statuto*, than they did formerly under

the wings of their despotic friends. It was once affirmed and believed, and all history seemed to demonstrate it, that the unification of peoples was affected only by the force of conquest, and by the confiscations of property, and never in any other manner. Spain, England, France, and Russia, by these means, became united into great nations; and never was there any instance in which even a single province spontaneously and cheerfully gave up its own self-government to mould itself into the national stamp." "And hère", exclaimed the orator with energy, "here I cannot hide from you a certain emotion of pride which I feel in affirming, that Italy has been the first to give to the civilized world this new and most salutary example. Seven vast provinces cheerfully and spontaneously annulled upon the altar of the Nation their own proper autonomy, which in some was more ancient even than that of Rome herself. Therefore, illustrious strangers seated at this table, on returning to your native cities, deny with all your force the common error that the populace (*la plebe minuta*) feel and know none other than their local interests, never rise to general and abstract conceptions, nor understand clearly the more lofty and meditated ideas of the great writers. In Italy, you have ocular demonstration, that the multitude join in one idea their highest interest and the resolution to give their blood and lives for this abstract notion, this geographical expression, which bears the name of Italy. If, at the same time, there ever were a resuscitated nation which owed love and gratitude to the pens of its literary men, and the pencils of its artists, truly it is our own country. For a century past, at least, not one of our great writers has failed in the duty of a good citizen. They were all content to live in poverty, persecuted, and dispersed, but there was not one of them, not even one I say, who soiled his fair fame by prostituting his pen to venial purposes, to defending the doctrines, the sophisms, and the evil practices of oppressors." After this, Mamiani said little more, but turned gracefully to salute from the depth of his own noble spirit, and in the name of all his colleagues, the generous individuals who had hastened from various parts of Europe to celebrate with them the centenary of Dante, and the unification of Italy of which he is the symbol. "I call them by the dear name of brothers", he exclaimed, "not by chance, not by any figure of rhetoric, but with profound and, appropriate signification, because, while beyond the ocean, the last chains of a suffering portion of

the human race fall broken in pieces, various individuals in Europe complaisantly throw doubt on the nobility of our common origin, and the consanguinity of our races, assigning to us for progenitors—I will not say what—but something more odious and more vile than the stones of Deucalion and of Pyrrha. To ourselves here assembled, it will suffice to reply by these two facts, visibly divine, the genius of Dante Allighieri, and the always increasing fraternity of Nations.”* With these words the *caro Signor Conte* concluded: the room rang with reiterated applause, and those who were near embraced him with an impulsive but respectful ardour. Thus ended the memorable banquet given to the strangers who had assembled in Florence to commemorate along with the Italians the sixth centenary of Dante, and the unification of Italy.

After this we separated. It was a calm and truly Italian night, as the Author, in company with two friends, walked home to his hotel, the lovely Lungo l’Arno sleeping, like beauty, in the moonlight beams.

Little more now remains to be added. On the following morning the Gonfaloniere, with a commission of the Priori, presented to the King, in commemoration of the Centenary of Dante, the gold medal modelled by the sculptor Enrico Pazzi, and engraven by Ruffaale Sanesi. His Majesty received it with very great pleasure. The head of Dante on this medal bears a close resemblance to the fresco head by Giotto in the chapel of the Bargello, but with the difference of age required. On the reverse, within a laurel wreath, is the inscription:

AL DIVINO POETA
L’ITALIA
NEL MAGGIO MDCCCLXV

MUNICIPIO FIORENTINO

Examples of this handsome medal in silver or in bronze, along with a complimentary letter, were also presented to those Dantophilists whose works had been deposited in the library of the Municipio. Nothing, in fact, was omitted on this occasion, which could gratify and do honour to those whom the love of Dante and of Italy had drawn from distant lands to join in this great festival;

* See the notice of Mamiani’s speech in the *Nazione*, Maggio 19.

and the Author is persuaded that he is only speaking the grateful sentiments of all other strangers in thus recording his own.

CHAPTER X.

The Discovery of Dante's bones at Ravenna. The History of the Poet's sepulchre. Description of the bones. Il Padre Santi. Description of the Crystal urn. The Festival of the three days — Saturday June 24th, Sunday June 25th, and Monday June 26th. The Processions, Banquets, Illuminations, etc. Final procession to replace the bones of Dante in their Marble urn — and the farewell speech of the Padre Giuliani.

We live in an age when miracles are no longer admissible, and when any approach to the marvellous immediately excites suspicion. It was not so in early times, nor in the middle ages, when the supernatural order of things was regarded less as a supplement to the natural order, than as a tacitly admitted part of it. We now know that miracles, as commonly understood, are impossible things, are suppositions at variance with the divine order which God has established in the works of creation, and would be contradictory to Himself.

“Le cose tutte quante
Hann' ordine tra loro; e questo è forma
Che l'universo a Dio fa simigliante.”

Parad. I., 103—5.

Belief in them was always necessary to the exercise of miracles, and ignorance and superstition were, in the middle ages, required for their success. Any event which is very remarkable either from the mode, or the time, of its occurrence, shares more or less in the marvel attached to miracles. But a line must here be drawn between the impossible and the possible. Many things which are shown to be possible are so very remarkable, that their occurrence suggests a more immediate interposition of the divine power than we are accustomed to contemplate in the established order of Nature. And this it does because our attention is more especially drawn to it, and the human mind is prone to regard with superstition what it cannot readily understand. In this we do ourselves injustice and God too. We neglect to appreciate the phenomena which are familiar to us, and we exaggerate those which are not. But all have the same origin, and are

brought about by the same secondary causes, though these may be only imperfectly known to us. One or two connecting links left out of a true and simple story are sufficient to impart to it a mysterious character. New meanings given to words have the same effect, and it is this which has involved many natural statements in a veil of superstitious mysticism.

When, ere the excitement occasioned by the National Festival of Dante had well subsided, the sacred bones of the Poet came forth from their hiding place at Ravenna, the announcement was laughed at as a capital joke, and it was facetiously affirmed that the bones of Beatrice would soon follow their example. The coincidence with the recent Festival seemed too remarkable an occurrence to have happened in a natural way. But we know that it did so happen, though it might be related as if it did not, for the supernatural character of an event depends more on the way in which it is stated, than on the actual manner of its occurrence.

Dante's bones fell out of a wooden box, the side of which a workman, employed in demolishing an old wall where it was concealed, knocked away, when down they tumbled. The discovery, however, was none the less remarkable for their falling on the ground. When we have learnt all the particulars of a strange event, the details do not lessen its importance, nor, in devout minds, remove the conviction that the hand of God was there; in fact, they strengthen it by showing its harmony with the divine universal order. For though in the poetic regions of Dante's Paradise, and in the meditations of pious souls, it may be said —

Chè dove Dio senza mezzo governa
La legge natural nulla relieva,

yet in all terrestrial phenomena the laws of Nature rule.

Dante ended his earthly pilgrimage Sept. 14, 1321, at the age of fifty-six. The last years of it were passed at Ravenna under the protection of his friend Guido Novello da Polenta, the nephew of Francesca da Rimini. He was buried in the cemetery of the Franciscans with the honours due to his rank and reputation, Guido following as a mourner and pronouncing his funeral oration. His remains were deposited in a marble urn, *in arca lapidea*, on which was inscribed an epitaph attributed to Giovanni di Virgilio. "This first sepulchre was meant only as a temporary one; but Guido being soon after driven from Ravenna, and dying young, his intention of erecting a

more noble monument to the memory of his friend was never carried out. In 1483 Bernardo Bembo, then prætor in Ravenna for the Republic of Venice, caused a marble monument to be raised to the Poet, the work of Pietro Lombardi, on which was his portrait in basso-relievo, and a new epitaph. This monument was repaired and re-decorated, in 1692, by the city of Ravenna, at the instance of the Florentines Domenico Maria Corsi, cardinal legate of Emelia, and Giovanni Salviati, prolegate. Finally, in 1780, the cardinal legate, Luigi Valenti Gonzaga, caused the present small temple to be erected, in which the sculpture by Pietro Lombardo is still preserved.

How long the poet's remains continued in their original resting-place is somewhat doubtful, for although the marble urn in which Guido Novello had deposited them remained unaltered for a century and a half, there is reason to think it probable that the bones were secretly removed a few years afterwards, on the approach of the cardinal legate of Bologna, Bertrand del Poggetto, the creature of Pope John XXII., whose infamous intention it was to have them disinterred, excommunicated, and burnt; a papal project happily prevented by the firmness of the Florentine Pino della Tosa, and the Signor Ostagio da Polenta.* After this, according to the reports of the Commission appointed by the Italian government to verify the fact of the discovery of Dante's bones, they may have been placed, without further apprehension of violence, in the monument erected by Bembo, and there have remained until menaced by new perils which induced the cautious friars of the Convent to abstract and conceal the precious treasure as best they could. This may have been when the Florentines, in 1519, besought Pope Leo the Tenth to procure their transmission to Florence, where Michael Angelo had offered to erect a monument worthy of their reception.

It is doubtful, also, if in 1692, the remains of Dante were replaced in the tomb as restored by the Cardinal Corsi, for two years after this, on the occasion of the privilege of sanctuary being denied to the locality, because Dante having been declared a heretic his remains were held to destroy this immunity, the friars affirmed *that the bones of Dante were no longer there*. A note in the handwriting of the sacristan of the convent, found on the cover of a mass-book once belonging to it, states

* See the notice in the *Athenæum* for Sept. 9th, 1865.

that when in 1780 the sarcophagus was opened, nothing whatever was found in it. This writing has been identified with that of Frà Tommaso Marredi.

The small cemetery of the Franciscans occupied the right-angular space formed by the sidewall of the convent, and that of the church. Here the two portions meet of the *Strada Dante*, also at right angles to each other. The narrower one leads up to the sepulchre, the broader passes in front. In the line of this frontage was a wall that connected it with the ancient chapel of Braccioforte, behind which was another stone-wall that joined on to that of the Rasponi chapel in the church. It was on removing this wall to effect certain improvements, that about ten o'clock in the morning on the 27th of May, the pick of the workman came in contact with a rough wooden box, the left side of which fell out, and down tumbled a lot of bones. At the angle where the wall behind the chapel of Braccioforte joined on to that of the Rasponi chapel, there was found a door bricked up, and it was on removing some of these bricks that the discovery of the rough pinewood-box occurred. Many of the bones having fallen out, there was seen on the inside of the bottom plank the following inscription written with a pen —

Dantis Ossa
Denuper revisa die 3 Junij
1677.

The box was about 30 inches long, 11 wide, and 12 deep,* it was imperfectly shaped, and the planks roughly nailed together. Subsequently a more important inscription was found externally on the lid —

Dantis Ossa
A me Frē Antonio Santi
hic posita
Año 1677. Die 18 Octobris.

It does not appear quite certain whether the master bricklayer, Pio di Luigi Feletti, or his man, Angelo Dradi, gave the lucky knock which brought out the bones of Dante, perhaps it will never be accurately known, but the astonished *capo maestro* Pio, and Angelo the *operajo*, gathered up the precious relics in all haste, and carried them into the contiguous little temple of Dante. The authorities of the city being forthwith informed of the

* Or 0.77, 0.284, and 0.30, of the mètre respectively. See "*La Scoperta delle Ossa di Dante*", by Romolo Conti. Ravenna, 1865.

event, the Syndic and assessors, with notaries, and other functionaries, Cavaliers, Counts, Advocates and Doctors, for the news spread rapidly, hurried almost breathless to the spot, an examination of the bones was made, and an inventory taken. After this they were religiously replaced in the original box, which was enclosed in another one, and fastened with lock and key, the Syndic taking the latter away with him to deposit it in the Municipio. An official declaration was at the same time drawn up by the Notary Rambelli, and signed by all present.

The description and list of the bones made on this occasion does not materially differ from that which was afterwards drawn up by the royal commission.

The examination showed that they had belonged to a robust adult male, of an advanced stage of manhood. They were of a darkish red colour somewhat approaching to black. Their substance was, in general, not obviously altered. Only in some of the round-headed articulations, at the extremities of certain long bones, and in the thin, delicate plates of several of the internal bones of the head, were there any alterations or appearances of injury from time, moisture, or mechanical causes. The missing bones of the skeleton were—the lower jaw, the atlas vertebra, a spurious rib of the right side, the ulna bone of each forearm, the fibula of the right leg, the styloid process of the right temporal bone, also part of the os coccyx. It was in the bones of the hands and feet that the greatest deficiency occurred. Only the os magnum of each carpus, an unciform bone, and four phalanges of the fingers, were found of all the bones of the two hands, fifty-four in number. Two other phalanges were, however, subsequently found in the marble urn. Of the bones of the feet there were wanting the astragalus and the three cuneiform bones of the right foot, the two scaphoid bones, five metatarsal bones, as it would appear, and twenty-six phalanges of the toes, one of which was afterwards found in the marble urn. The sternum was in two pieces, and the ensiform cartilage had become ossified. The first portion of the os coccyx was united to the sacrum. The upper jaw was toothless. The Royal Commissioners subsequently remarked that the Poet had only had two incisors in the upper jaw instead of four, and that the last right molar tooth, the third or wisdom tooth, had never been developed.

The entire length of the skeleton, the bones being brought together in their natural relations, was one mètre

fifty-five centimètres, or 5.0854 English feet, which, allowing for the thickness of the interposed cartilages between the vertebræ and other soft parts, would show that the Poet was of medium stature. The weight of the bones, without the head, was, in pounds avoirdupois, 9.153657; the head weighed 1.610 lb.

The two phalanges of the hands, and the one of a foot, found in the marble urn, or sarcophagus, agreed exactly in form and colour with those in the wooden box; these bones had a remarkable flattening which served as an additional and peculiar evidence of their having belonged to the same individual.

It was not till the seventh of June, at eight in the morning, in the presence of the Municipal Counsellors, the Royal Commissioners and others that the sepulchral urn of the Poet was solemnly opened to ascertain whether it were empty or not. It was an anxious moment, for should another skeleton there be found, the bones of Dante would for ever remain doubtful. After making a cut in the wall, and other preparations to get at the urn, the workmen effected an opening, the cover was pushed aside, and the urn was found empty! A universal shout of joy burst from all present at this conclusive fact. The treasure which, according to a tradition preserved among the friars of the Convent, had been hidden near the chapel of Braccioforte, had indeed come to light, though few, if any, had ever suspected what that treasure might be.

Thus also was it shown that, for nearly two centuries, the gifted of all countries, poets, philosophers, and historians, who as pilgrims had come to bow down before Dante's sacred remains, had knelt before an empty urn, and returned to their homes perfectly satisfied.

All that was found within it were the three phalanges already mentioned, a few withered laurel leaves, some dust, and a trace of putrified animal matter at the lower part.

Some other circumstances in reference to these remains require also to be noticed. There is in the Royal Gallery at Florence a mask of Dante, believed to have been taken from his face after death; it formerly belonged to the Marquis Torrigiani, who bequeathed it to the Gallery. On placing this mask in contact with the face of the skeleton, there was found to be a most remarkable correspondence. The length of the nasal bones was identical, and the protuberances of the frontal bones, more especially the superciliary ridges, agreed exactly.

It was to the cranium, as the receptacle of the organ of thought, that the Commissioners more particularly directed their attention, but to its external surface chiefly. The head was finely modelled, the cranium especially showed by its ample and exquisite form that it had held the brain of no ordinary man. The occipital region was prominently marked, the frontal was also amply and broadly expanded, and the anterior part of the frontal bone had a vertical direction in relation to the bones of the face. Measurements were carefully taken. The periphery of the head was 52 cent. 5 mill. The frontal and parietal eminences were more prominent than usual. There was also a remarkable longitudinal prominence on the middle and upper part of the frontal bone, and beyond the vertex, on the median line, were two elevations. Other prominences were also observed. To ascertain the relative bulk of the cephalic mass, the cavity of the cranium was filled with grains of rice, and the quantity being weighed was found to be 1420 grammes, or 3.1321 lbs. avoirdupois. The dimensions of the cranium taken indirectly, that is measured on the curve, were, for the occipito-frontal diameter 31 cent. 7 mill.; for the transverse diameter, taken from ear to ear, 31 cent. 8 mill.; for the height 14 cent.

The bumps and lumps on Dante's sacred head were matters of serious consideration to the Commissioners; and, following the theory of Gall, they found in them every characteristic for which the Poet was distinguished—love, poetry, music, satire, religion, benevolence, veneration, conscientiousness, desire of independence, self-esteem, pride, fierceness, circumspection, capacity to succeed in the arts of design and the cultivation of the highest philosophy.

"Men gifted with this organization", they remark, "manifest in an eminent degree the inductive faculty, embrace in their meditations matters of the highest moment, and are capable of discovering the most abstract and distant relations of things. Such is the organization, as says the celebrated French phrenologist, of those universal geniuses who have been the real masters and teachers of mankind."

Such was the cerebral organization of that mighty mind, which, dazzling the world with the splendour of its poetic genius, laid the foundation of an eternal greatness deep in the universal sympathies of our race, and gathering facts from the history of the past, and the bitter experi-

ence of the present, wrought out for the Italian people the first principles of a glorious future, of which he himself became the apostle and symbol.*

One who had rendered so eminent a service to posterity as the concealment of Dante's mortal remains, thus preserving them from the violence of enemies and the insidious coveting of friends, deserved well of his country, and something more should be known of him than merely his name. All, however, which the most diligent researches have found out, is, that Antonio Santi was born in Ravenna August 3, 1644, of Leonardo and Elizabeth Ingoli, that he took the habit of the Minor Friars, and in 1677, when he placed the wooden box with its precious contents in the wall where it was found, was chancellor of the convent, the capitulary acts of which, now preserved by the Comune, bear his signature from 1672 to 1679. He was subsequently elected *guardiano*, or head of the establishment.

The discovery of this treasure afforded the Citizens of Ravenna the opportunity of holding a festival of their own which should surpass in intensity of personal interest the great national Festival at Florence. They spared neither money nor means to make it worthy of the occasion. Dante's bones had to be re-interred after lying publicly in state. This formed the peculiar feature of the Festival, which included also the more ordinary popular doings of processions, illuminations, theatrical performances, academies, races, tombola, etc. It began on June 24th, and ended June 26th. On removing the wall from the quadrilateral chapel of Braccioforte, it was found that the structure itself consisted of four piers, with intermediate semicircular arches, forming a very convenient small temple for the display of Dante's remains. Here, therefore, was erected an altar-shaped dais, about 9 feet long, 4 wide, and 5 feet high, on two steps; it was covered with crimson cloth, hanging in folds in the centre, and gathered up in pleats at the angles, it had a deep gold fringe; the steps were also covered with the same, as was the whole of the space within the iron rails. Beyond it was a carpet. On the dais was placed a crystal urn, or sarcophagus, to receive the bones of the Poet. It was of plate glass, in the form of an antique incense-box, with sloping sides, and roof-like cover, on the apex of which was a gilt vase. The framework, also gilt, was of an

* See the article in the Athenæum before noticed.

elegant scroll pattern, with figures of angels at the angles, and supported on lions' paws. There was a large golden wreath in front. The medium length of the crystal urn was about eight feet; it was about two feet six inches wide, and nearly five feet high to the top of the cover. Around the whole was a handsome railing.

Great were the preparations for the approaching festival; and the labour of love to celebrate the memory, and honour the remains of the immortal Dante, were nobly carried out. All the lovers of the Poet had reason to rejoice, and deeply thank the Ravennati for their pious fervor and their patriotic zeal. Salvos of artillery ushered in the memorable morning of the 24th of June. At six o'clock, when the streets were already becoming thronged with the citizens and their country friends, and vehicles of all descriptions were pouring into the venerable city, rousing it up to an excitement of animation such as it had not witnessed for many centuries, and probably never will again, the sacred remains of Dante Alighieri were quietly and privately carried from the place of their deposit, and carefully laid out in the crystal urn within the chapel of Braccioforte, a white cloth being placed over them as a veil. But, long before this, Ravenna had put on her festive garments, banners floated from windows and balconies, draperies were hung out in gay profusion, triumphal arches had sprung up in the line of the procession, decorated with green garlands, and laurels, and wreaths of flowers, and bunches of the foliage of the ancient pine tree of Ravenna, while portraits, and inscriptions, and sonnets, and devices of various kinds completed the general decorations.

As the morning advanced, the excitement increased; graceful gatherings of the beauty and fashion of Ravenna assembled in the *palchi* and other erections near the tomb appropriated to privileged spectators. Windows became crowded with lovely faces, and old walls all alive with human beings. Ravenna had risen from her sleep of a thousand years to rejoice in the presence of the resuscitated Poet. Towards the hour of noon, the streets, which but for the assistance of the military, and the order prescribed, would have been a mass of inextricable confusion, were densely crowded with a living mass all eager to witness the procession, and do honour to Dante.

The Palace of the Municipality was the appointed place of meeting for those who were to take part in the procession to Braccioforte. A few minutes after twelve, the

procession set out, preceded by National guards, and accompanied by numerous military bands. Among the leading personages were the Syndic of Ravenna, the Count Gioacchino Rasponi, who acted the principal part, the Minister of Public Instruction, who represented the King, the deputy of the Gonfaloniere of Florence, himself prevented from attending on account of the Festival of St. John's day in his own city, the Count Pietro Serego Allighieri, the descendant of the Poet, the Prefects of Ravenna and Bologna, a deputation from Venice, numerous senators, the representatives of various learned societies, of charitable institutions, and of the press; one or two ladies also walked in the procession, as was most fitting they should, seeing how Dante had honoured and exalted their sex.

Arrived at the chapel of Braccioforte, the Syndic of Ravenna, the deputy of the Gonfaloniere of Florence, and the Count Pietro Serego Allighieri entered within the railings of the sacred enclosure, and removed the veil from the crystal urn. It was a most solemn moment—the multitude bowed down uncovered—the hearts of all were moved, and many eyes were streaming fast with tears. Now did the dry bones of Dante Allighieri receive the veneration of the Italian people and the Italian King—a homage worthy alike of the Nation and of the man.

The Syndic made a touching and effective speech, and, along with the representative of Florence, deposited a laurel crown on the crystal shrine. The procession then returned to the Municipio, and there dispersed.

Shortly after this, the Marquis Gozzadini opened the annual proceedings of the National History Society in the great Hall of the Council, where various communications were read. At four o'clock there was a banquet in the Hall of the Theatre Allighieri, given by the Syndic to the illustrious visitors and others who had taken part in the proceedings of the morning, covers had been laid for upwards of a hundred, but numerous places were vacant, the invited from Florence did not all appear. Many toasts were given and many speeches were made, and the entertainment went off with festive hilarity. A few ladies were present, one of whom, the Signora Dora d'Istria, observed that Dante in raising his love for Beatrice to the skies, had ennobled the sex, and taken the first step towards the emancipation of woman.

After the banquet there was a horse race on the right bank of the Candiana. The racing over, and the pre-

miums awarded, the elite of society repaired to the Theatre, to hear the music of Verdi in the *Rigoletto*, and the noble hymn of the Cav. Mariani, which was a great success, and was rapturously applauded; of the words, by the Count Caffi, however, the less said the better.

Ravenna was now in a blaze of artificial light, the glare of gas, and lamps, and torches, and candles fell on motley groups of men, women, and children. Here were citizens, and soldiers, and contadini, mixed up with groups of fair young girls whose laughing eyes, and lively manner fully expressed the delight they felt, while the more calm countenances of elderly matrons showed the wonder which the scene excited, and the warmth it occasioned, for, in truth, it was very hot. The illumination was universal, but the brightest beams of all were at Dante's urn. Braccioforte was brilliantly lighted up with tricoloured lamps of the national colours, while over the crystal urn a large and splendid candelabrum shed a flood of light. Perpetual crowds of devotees proceeded to visit the sacred spot, and at midnight the streets were still crowded.

Thus ended the first day of the Dante Festival at Ravenna. The second day, Sunday, was comparatively one of repose. At nine o'clock the Trades Union Societies with banners and music paid a solemn visit to the shrine, to venerate the bones of Dante, and deposit a civic crown. At twelve there was an Academy, and a distribution of prizes to the successful students of Art in the Hall of the Belle Arti, at which the Professor Scarabelli pronounced an appropriate and much applauded discourse. At three, the new Prefect, the Commendatore Alasia, gave a dinner, at which most of those were present who had dined with the Syndic the day before. Later in the afternoon there was a Tombola, and in the evening was repeated the entertainment in the Theatre, and the illumination of the city.

This day afforded a good opportunity to examine in detail the Crystal Urn and its precious contents. It was a strange and touching spectacle here to behold the bones of him laid out whom all Italy and the civilized world delight to honour. Placed carefully at full length upon a white silk bed, the head slightly raised, these remains of the greatest of European Poets were very easily seen. They were of a dark warm brownish tint. The cranium was most beautiful in shape and proportion—pity that the lower jaw was wanting to complete the head. Within the railing was a guard of honour of the National Guards,

and the officer in command remained on the spot. On the dais were four inscriptions, along with the family arms, the ancient and the modern, at the front and back. On the front the inscription was —

CITTADINO O FORESTIERO CHE TU SEI
MIRA REVERENTE E TACITO LE MORTALI RELIQUIE
DEL POETA SOVRANO
CREATORE DEL NOSTRO NOBILISSIMO IDIOMA
MAESTRO A TUTTO IL MONDO DI SAPIENZA CIVILE

At the back —

SOLO E MENDICO
ANDÒ RAMINGO PER DIVERSE CONTRADE
IMPRECANDO NE' FORTI CARMI ALLE CRUDELE DISCORDIE
CHE TENEANO SERVA E DISUNITA L'ITALIA

The inscriptions at the ends were, on the left hand —

STANCO DEL PATIR LUNGO E AFFIEVOLITO DAGLI ANNI
NON ISDEGNÒ GL' INVITI DI MAGNANIMO PRINCIPE
VENNE A QUESTA TERRA OSPITALE
QUI SPIRÒ LA GRANDE ANIMA
E QUI LE SUE OSSA HANNO ONORE E RIPOSO

On the right hand —

LUI PROPUGNANTE LA CARA LIBERTÀ DELLA PATRIA
NON FIRENZE
MA IRA FURIOSA DI PARTE
DANNAVA A PERPETUO ESILIO *

Besides the civic crowns of laurel there were no other offerings, it had probably been thus ordered. No miracles were wrought on the occasion, which may perhaps have been a source of disappointment to a few, who did not recollect that, according to the Church, the bones had belonged to a heretic—possibly, if the priests had had

* Translations of the Inscriptions:

1. Citizen or stranger, as thou mayest be, reverent and silent regard with admiration the mortal remains of the sovereign Poet, creator of our most noble idiom, and the master of civil wisdom to the whole world.
2. Alone, in poverty he wandering went through various regions, calling down curses in his lofty verse on the cruel discords which kept Italy divided and enslaved.
3. Tired of long suffering, and worn out with years, he did not disdain the invitations of a magnanimous prince, he came to this hospitable city, here he breathed forth his magnanimous soul, and here his bones have honour and repose.
4. Defending the dear liberty of his native land, not Florence, but the fury of party, condemned him to perpetual exile.

to do with the festival, this difficulty might have been got over. A silly body of a countryman looking on very earnestly, declared that he saw one of the bones move—he was rebuked by his more intelligent neighbours as an ignorant fellow for his discernment.

On Monday morning, June 26th, with a similar solemnity to that of the 7th of June, when the authorities went to open the sepulchre of the Poet, and to their great joy found it empty, they now proceeded to restore the sacred remains to their original resting place. At twelve o'clock the cortege set out from the Municipio to Braccioforte. Not all of those who had taken part in the ceremony of Saturday remained to pay the last funeral honours to the Poet's remains, among the absent was the Conte Serego whom urgent family matters constrained to return home on Sunday. The senator Pasolini took his place. Arrived at Braccioforte, the bones of Dante were carefully taken from the crystal urn, were numbered, and laid in a solid coffin of walnut wood, covered with zinc, a document on parchment was enclosed in memorial of what had taken place, and the notary Rambelli registered the act. The remains were then carried to Dante's tomb, borne by the Syndic of Ravenna, Count Rasponi, the Prefect, Comm. Alasia, the representative of Florence, and the Senator Pasolini. These gentlemen descended into the marble urn, the bones of Dante were replaced in their original depository, and the Padre Giuliani in fervid and eloquent language pronounced over them a final farewell. He commenced by stating that, in this "Italica Terra", the harassed and weary soul of Dante Allighieri came to solace itself with the cheering honours of a noble friendship; here, in his fervent prayers, and in his contemplations, he experienced a foretaste of the divine peace; here he poured forth his soul in the last cantos of his divine poem, and from hence was speedily called above to perpetuate them amid the glories of Heaven.

"To you, O worthy Ravennati, he confided his mortal spoils, which, in the sadness of subsequent times, disappeared, it would seem, from the profane regards of men, and have now revealed themselves, as it were by a miracle, to justify the prophetic declaration of the hoped-for unity and prosperity of Italy. To you, therefore, be this unique treasure recommended which Italy confirmed as its own, when, in the name of Dante it recognized itself and came together, and resolved to rise again in the fellowship of civilized nations. May these sacred

bones now rest in peace, and never more may they fear the outrages of men and the injury of revolving years. Italians! Cease not to honour them both with the mind and heart, they are the bones of your great Father. Approach them in humility and with trembling, that you may derive from them inspiration to follow virtue and wisdom Bones consecrated and exalted by the veneration of every human heart, I salute you: I salute you in the name of Italy, in the name of all who feel that a glorious tomb suffices for the felicity of a pious Nation." Giuliani concluded with the following words—

"Let these bones once so humiliated exult, and may they fructify with the dew of Heaven to the raising up of generations on generations of heroes. All peoples bless them, our brothers bless them who know how to love and to suffer, and are resolved to have a great and glorious country. May the Lord of Justice protect them: let us all venerate them: comforted with hope, they will flourish in the majesty of the eternal splendors."

Oh! fortunate Ravennati, to possess this treasure so dear to all Italy, and so precious to the world. Well have you shown how worthy you are to keep it, and to preserve it for ever. But Dante's spirit is ubiquitous, and dwells with all those who love and honour him. In the unity of that spirit Italy is one with all who in their hearts can truly say—

ONORATE L'ALTISSIMO POETA!

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